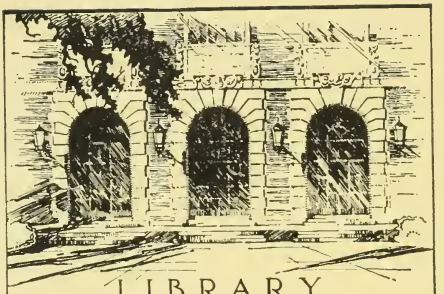

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TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD.

A ROMANCE.

When sick of imprisoning walls,
  I fly to the sunshine and flowers :
When grief, or when care on me falls,
  I forget it, Romance, in thy bowers.

Not all a Fiction ; much of Truth is there :
Historic Records, and a Poet's Dream.

TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD.

A ROMANCE.

BY ELIZABETH THORNTON,
AUTHORESS OF "THE MARCHIONESS," "LADY ALICE," &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD.

A ROMANCE.

I'm sick of mincing lords, and feather'd belles,
Of gilded halls ; where cold inanity
Sits piping forth her song of nothing,
With unvarying voice.
Show me rough nature in her sternest mood ;
Denying all, save a bare sustenance ;
And that obtained by peril, toil, and care :
Where danger stands, as helmsman to the bark,
Reeling, and quivering on the hidden rock.

HAVING given, in the two preceding volumes, a relation of what occurred to some of my remoter ancestors, I would fain have gone on with the annals of the house of Felsenberg; but on looking over the ancient family records, I found the manuscripts so mildewed and defaced by time and neglect, that I decided on leaving them for a period of more leisure, and to substi-

tute for those musty pages the more modern and not less singular circumstances which occurred to myself.

Let those who may hereafter read this narrative, with the extraordinary events it contains—events which, occurring at an early period of my life, perhaps gave to my character that eccentricity of which I have since been accused—let them pause ere they pronounce judgment, and condemn it as an extravagant and improbable tale, and recollect the words of an illustrious man, and repeated by others equally distinguished, that, "Truth is strange, stranger than fiction."

Somebody has said, that brevity is the soul of wit, (and believing, as I do, that the modern art of spinning "long yarns," from very slender materials, tends to weaken and destroy the effect of many a tale that would be otherwise deeply interesting, I shall not make "*La sauce trop longue*," as the French cooks say when they describe

an insipid dish, but give my history as briefly and succinctly as I can ; without destroying the lucid distinctness, which is necessary to give force and effect to my tale.

Historical accuracy, or details of pedigree, would but tire my readers; I shall therefore only say that, through my mother, whom I lost in my early youth, I am descended from the Counts of Kohlhaf and Felsenberg ; and as for reasons which will be sufficiently obvious without explanation, I do not give the name I then bore, nor the one by which I am now known, I shall call myself Mitford, and proceed at once to my narrative.

On the 10th of February, 18—, I embarked at Portsmouth on board the Nautilus Indiaman, bound for Calcutta, under the protection of Captain Hamilton, a friend of my father's, who had kindly undertaken to deliver me into the hands of my

aunt, residing there; and who, on her part, had as kindly offered to relieve her brother from the heavy charge of five portionless daughters, on the slender stipend of a country curate, by providing for one of them; or rather, by giving one of them an opportunity of providing for herself, at the great matrimonial mart of the East.

My education had been but little calculated to forward such a plan as this; for although I certainly knew something of what girls are commonly taught, I had also learned many things of which they are generally ignorant, and which many people think they ought not to know.

My father was fond of scientific and philosophical experiments, and having no son, when he wanted assistance in his investigations and manipulations, had usually employed me; and I had thus got a smattering of science, which might in time have raised me to the dignity of a blue-stock-

ing, had not fate decreed otherwise. I knew something of chemistry, mineralogy, botany, &c. but not much of any thing.

My aunt was greatly shocked when she heard of this "strange warp," as she was pleased to term it. She concluded her letter with — "If, however, you think the girl has wit enough to keep her own counsel, and will never suffer any one to suspect she knows any thing about such out-of-the-way stuff, I will keep my promise and pay her expenses out."

I was fitted out, and embarked accordingly. The vessel sailed, and I became the victim to that filthy and cruel fiend, the *mal de mer*, that curse of "travellers by sea," which renders the prayers of all good Christians doubly needful. The weather was stormy; we had baffling head winds which opposed our progress, and we made little way, I was told.

For nearly a fortnight I neither knew

nor cared for any thing that passed around me. I had heard my father say, sea sickness was occasioned by a pressure of blood on the brain; and I tried every plan and posture I could devise, to prevent that pressure. Whether I succeeded or not, I cannot say, or whether, as I believe, I had now become more accustomed to the motion of the ship; certain it is that, about this time, I felt more at ease than I had hitherto done, and was well enough to take my seat at the public table.

During my confinement to my cabin I had many friendly and inquiring visits from the lady passengers; but my most frequent visiter was a Mrs. Muggins, about thirty years of age, the wife of a man who held some subordinate situation at Calcutta, in the service of the East India Company, —a fat, rosy-faced little woman, of the most overwhelming loquacity, who, having determined to patronize me, insisted on my

sitting next her at table; talked to entertain and "keep up my spirits," as she said, till she became a nuisance to me.

I knew she meant it kindly; and, as I was neither ill-bred nor ill-natured, I bore the daily martyrdom with tolerable patience, till one unlucky day, at dinner, I was listening with the most earnest attention to the Captain, who was relating to the gentlemen the result of an experiment he had been making, by sinking an empty bottle, corked and sealed, to a vast depth in the sea. Just at this time did Mrs. Muggins insist on telling *her* "tale of a tub," for such it literally was, being the history of a whole wash of fine linen, in the time of her first husband, poor, dear Mr. Smith. I was vexed and irritated; for, although I had followed my Aunt's advice, and "kept my own counsel," I was anxious to hear the result of the experiment, and I cut the story short with some not very civil speech, I believe; for she took it in high

dudgeon, and replied in a manner I thought insulting.

War was now formally declared between us, and as she had her partisans and I had mine, we had daily skirmishes. Mrs. Muggins and her party attacked me and my party, by talking at us, while we annoyed them by cool sarcasm, or haughty contempt.

It was already a "very pretty quarrel;" and in time, I have no doubt, we might have got up as good a feud as the Guelphs and *Gibbelini*, or the Capulets and Montagues; but fate had decided that the leading belligerents should cease to persecute each other.

We had been at sea about a month, when, one day in the middle of March, the sun set amid clouds of a strange mixture of black and red, and, from some particular appearance of the sky, the seamen foretold a storm. My heart sunk with apprehension; a sort of foreboding of misfortune depressed my spirits. I asked the Captain whether

he anticipated a violent tempest, and consequent danger to the vessel.

"Danger!" he replied, gaily. "Oh no; with our good ship and sea-room we have nothing to fear."

I endeavoured to cheer myself with this hope, and returned to my seat on the deck. The sun had now set, and the sea, although calm, appeared to heave and swell with a sort of sullen sound I had never heard before. There was a dead stillness in the air, which, however, soon gave place to a puffing breeze, that alternately fluttered in the sails, and then died away. Gradually the wind strengthened, and the sea heaved more heavily.

The moon, which had now risen, appeared struggling through the black clouds that passed rapidly across its disc, and occasionally threw a momentary gleam upon the ocean. Presently a tremendous blast sent the ship almost on her beam ends, and again died away.

"We shall have a devil of a gale by and by," said the first officer, "but don't let the women know it."

I found they were not aware of my being on deck, and I wrapped my dark shawl closer round me, and sat still, lest I should be discovered and ordered down.

But a short time, however, elapsed ere one of the gentlemen perceived me, and prevailed on me to go below.

Sick and desponding, without taking off my clothes, I threw myself on my bed and tried to sleep; but I could do nothing but listen to the hurricane, which seemed to be every moment more violent, and to the augmenting fury of the waves, breaking with a noise like thunder against the sides of the ship, the timbers creaking as if about to part asunder. I could bear this gloomy state no longer; I got up, intending to make my way to the deck, but before I reached it I met the Captain.

"Miss Mitford," said he, "you must return to your cabin instantly!"

I could not see his face, but I thought his voice faltered. I obeyed, and again stretching myself on my bed, sank into a sort of troubled sleep. How long it lasted I know not, but I believe some hours. I was aroused by some one entering the cabin. It was totally dark. I could not see who it was; but a voice which, although quite unlike its usual shrill loud tone, was now husky and tremulous, I knew to be that of Mrs. Muggins.

"Miss Mitford," she said, "where are you? For God's sake get up and make some effort to save yourself: here you can have no chance!"

I started up bewildered, and only half conscious. "Where is the Captain?" I inquired.

"At the pumps," she replied, "with every man in the ship. We have sprung a leak, and the water is gaining on them fast. Come, we have no time to lose!"

As she said this, she had made her way

to me, taken me off the bed, and was drawing me towards the door of the cabin, ere I had recovered the temporary paralysis occasioned by fear; but the extraordinary, the magnanimous conduct of this woman, whose feelings I had often wounded by bitter words, and open contempt, seemed to awaken my torpid faculties. I felt that I had used her ill; and how had she avenged herself?

"Generous woman!" I said, "was it you alone who, in the hour of danger and of death, could think of me, and kindly seek to save me?"

"This is no time to bear malice," she replied, in a voice hardly audible.

I know not whether it was the extraordinary generosity of her conduct that roused the energy which belonged to my character, or the natural effect of despair; but I felt a sort of calm, I might call it courage, take place of the torpor and despondence which had hitherto chained my faculties.

Slowly, and with great difficulty, from the constant pitching and rolling of the ship, we made our way to the deck. Never shall I forget the chaotic, the fearful scene that presented itself. To describe it is impossible. Amid the din, the tumult, and uproar of the elements, and as it seemed to my startled ear, louder than all other sounds, I heard the ill-boding cry of, "Breakers ahead!" The next moment a mighty wave broke over us, and left us gasping for breath, wet, shivering, and astounded.

The morning appeared to be dawning, but so black and terrible had I never seen one. To speak was useless, to hear impossible; and though occupied in clinging with all my strength to something solid near me, I was aware that Mrs. Muggins was beside me, and was fastening my shawl round my waist. In a minute another monstrous wave came thundering down, and I knew no more till I found myself lying on a

solitary beach, close to the waters of the ocean, which appeared to be gradually receding.

The tempest had subsided, the air was calm, and the sun shining bright and warm; but the sea was still heaving with a deep and sullen swell, and dashing its waves in foam and fury on the shore, as if still impelled by the stormy wind.

I felt stiff and sore, my limbs ached as if I had been dreadfully beaten. However I got up, and was then first aware that the shawl which was round my waist, was also fastened to a large deal case, which had probably been used as a rabbit box, or hen coop, and to which, in all probability, I owed my escape from death; for it had hitched against a projecting rock, firmly imbedded in the beach.

In a moment the whole scene of the preceding night presented itself to my mind, like a horrible dream. I could recollect nothing distinctly which had occurred after

the second wave broke over us, but I had yet a sort of confused idea of some one having supported me, and kept me afloat amid the waves. "It must have been that warm-hearted woman, whom, in the arrogance of my fancied superiority of intellect, and education, I so despised," I said to myself, as, with a painful yearning of the heart, I recalled the numberless proofs she had given of a kind and affectionate disposition. "And I shall never, never see her again! never thank her for her kindness to me, the tendency to love and serve me she so constantly evinced. She lies beneath the still heaving sea, with the gallant ship and its gay passengers, which only yesterday traversed so lightly, so buoyantly, its ocean path," I exclaimed aloud, as I cast a melancholy glance across the wide expanse of water which lay before me, on which no object was visible, except the sea birds flying to and from the cliffs; which rose in the form of an irregular circus, and

bound like a lofty wall the beach on which I stood.

I walked towards them, and found they were composed of carbonate of lime, striped with veins of red sandstone, and perforated with numerous caverns and holes; doubtless the work of the sapping waves many, many years past; for they were now much above high-water mark, evident from the vegetation which clothed the beach at their base, and climbed up the steep and almost perpendicular range of rocks forming a bay, from which the tide was now fast retreating.

I walked on a long way hoping to find some part less steep, where I might climb up to get a view of the country, and some human habitation. As to where I was, or what sort of people I was likely to meet, I had no conception. But I found no mode of surmounting this natural barrier; every where it seemed alike steep and inaccessible, and I was soon quite weary; I felt also a heaviness and inclination to sleep.

I returned, therefore, to one of those recesses I had observed to be bedded with fine sand, and laid myself down. The sun beamed bright and warm upon me, and I fell asleep. When I awoke it had set. I felt cold and in pain; I crept back to the place where I had left my shawl stretched out to dry. My clothes had been so saturated with salt water, that they now attracted the humidity of the atmosphere, and felt damp and clammy.

The beach was strewed with sea grass which had been thrown up by high tides, and left bleaching in the sun, till some of it was soft and white as gauze paper, which it much resembled. I collected a quantity of this, and other sea weeds, and made a bed in one of the cavernous recesses, drawing the deal chest, which was light though large, before the entrance. I wrapped my shawl round me, lay down, and covering up myself, tried to sleep; but

my limbs ached too much to allow me to do so. I was cold, comfortless, desolate, and wretched.

At last the shivering gave place to a feverish heat or delirium. I cannot say I slept, and yet I was greatly tormented by a sort of wild dreaming. Sometimes I was struggling amid the waves, trying to swim, and screaming for aid. Then I was on shore, vainly striving to save some of my fellow passengers, who were stretching their arms towards me for succour and assistance.

How long I may have lain in this condition, I cannot certainly say, but I believe it was two days. When I awoke, or recovered my senses, the sun was just rising. I think I should have still slept on, had I not been disturbed by the wild screaming of the sea-gulls, which were hovering round my head, and flew away on my moving.

I felt weak and languid, and greatly

tormented with thirst. Recollecting I had seen water trickling down the rocks, I arose and endeavoured to find the spot again. When I succeeded, I had nothing to catch it in, and it was a long time before I was able to slake my thirst. Wearily, I returned to the cave, again fell asleep, and did not awake till the evening, when, for the first time since I had been on shore, I felt hungry; but it was quite in vain to hope for any thing to eat, for it was now nearly dark.

After a dismal rumination on the melancholy fate of my companions, and my own disastrous destiny, I had a hearty fit of crying, which, I think, was of more benefit than injury to me; for I felt more calm and resigned to that destiny, whatever it might be, and thankful to that Almighty Power which had preserved me. I again sunk into a quiet slumber, which lasted till the morning, when I awoke with a terrible

appetite, and got up to look for some of the crabs and other shell-fish, I remembered to have seen on the beach.

The sea-birds, unhappily, had forestalled me, and left little more than empty shells. I then returned to the cliffs, to seek for some eggs I had seen in the holes of the rock. I found them plentiful enough, but I had no means to cook them, and felt great repugnance to eat them raw. But as hunger strengthened prejudice gave way, and when I had swallowed one or two, I was surprised to find them so palatable. They had now become an object of importance to me, and I was glad to find them so abundant.

During my search I again examined the cliffs, in hopes to find some accessible place whereby I might climb to the top; and at length discovered what I sought, in a place where a huge mass of rock had fallen, and lay in fragments on the beach, leaving some-

thing like the first steps of a colossal staircase. I mounted these rude steps, and with a piece of flint endeavoured to make a ledge, or foot-hold, higher up. Unused to such work, I made small progress, and was soon weary. I returned to the cave, for the purpose of getting a piece of iron from the old chest, in which I succeeded; but not without great damage to my hands, and the exercise of much patience and perseverance.

The day was now far advanced, and I was, besides, too weary to labour again till I had rested; but it came into my head that with this same piece of iron I might make a fire, for flints were not scarce; I wanted only tinder, which I thought the white, paper-like sea-grass would furnish. I said to myself, "It is of a carbonaceous nature, it must necessarily be inflammable." I set to work, therefore, confidently; but, to use a vulgar phrase, I had reckoned

without my host; for I did not succeed in raising a flame, although I struck sparks enough.

It was probably saturated with salt, which counteracted its combustible property. I gave up, at last, my fruitless efforts, made my supper on the raw eggs, and went to bed — if so might be named my heap of grass and weeds.

The next morning I arose early, and, armed with my new instrument, (the piece of iron which in shape resembled a door hinge,) I made, with the help of a large stone for a hammer, so successful an attack on the rock, that at last I was able to surmount the difficulties of the ascent, and found myself on a sandy elevation, wholly barren for a considerable space around me.

It appeared to me that I was on an island; at least I could see no other land than that on which I stood. The cliffs, on

the highest point of which I was, spread round from east to west in the form of a bow, extending about a mile, perhaps, the cord of which was formed by the sea, and enclosing the bay in which I had been hitherto imprisoned. The aspect of the bay was due south.

Towards the north the ground went sloping down to the sea, and presented an appearance of something like vegetation, which increased as it approached the western part of the island, and terminated in a sort of wood, which clothed the back of the western point. No trace of a human habitation met my eye; no living thing appeared, save the restless sea birds flitting to and fro. The sun was bright and warm.

I descended slowly towards the wood, hardly decided in my own mind whether I most wished or feared to meet some human being. Yet, on reflection, I thought,

in my present situation, I had little to risk by a change of fortune. But my imagination had represented to me the possibility of meeting some wild animal, and when I reached the wood I had scarcely courage to enter it.

I stopped, looked cautiously round, and listened; advanced a few steps, stopped and listened again. All was still. The trees of different sorts, scarcely one of which I knew, were none of them high or large. Some of them had fallen from age or accident, and were decaying on the ground. Here and there I found one in the last stage of decomposition, and serving, in its turn, as food for another vegetable generation.

Large tufts of a soft cottony grass grew in patches at my feet. I stooped to collect some, and also some pieces of decayed wood, (which had mouldered into what I had been used to call touchwood,) intending to use it

as tinder, when I was dreadfully startled by a sudden chattering sound close to me. Without pause or reflection, I fled, from the impulse of fear, back to the place where I had climbed the cliff. On reaching it I ventured to look round, and finding I was not pursued, took courage, returned to fetch the grass and wood I had thrown down, and prepared to descend more deliberately, in order to reach my cave, which I began (now that I had been out on my travels) to consider a sort of home.

Difficult as it had been to climb the cliff, I found it still more so to descend. Fortunately I had been brought up in the country, and was not, therefore, wholly unused to a scramble. Taking the precaution to throw down first the bundle of wood and grass, I seated myself on the edge of the cliff, and arrived safely at the bottom, with no other injury than a few scratches.

Once again, as soon as I reached the cave,

I set about making a fire, and this time with success. Forlorn and wretched as my situation was, it is scarcely credible that any thing could excite a feeling of pleasure in my bosom; yet so it was. Short as the distance was that I had traversed, it had, nevertheless, occupied the whole day. The sun had set, the evening was chill, and I was weary, hungry, and spiritless — hardly decided whether I should sit down and relieve the oppression of my heart by a fit of tears, or go on with my fire-raising efforts.

But when at length, by dint of blowing till I was breathless, those efforts were rewarded, and I saw the wood kindle and burst into flame, as I sat and watched, and fed my fire with sticks and weeds, my heart dilated with a feeling of hope and joy. I was little more than twenty years old, and sanguine, as youth ever is. Hope at that age springs, like a phœnix, even from the

ashes of despair. With feelings of gratitude and thankfulness to Heaven I roasted my birds' eggs, calmly and confidently relying on the power that had hitherto preserved me for future protection; and when I had finished my supper, lay down and fell asleep, anticipating nothing but good for the future. Before I did so, however, I took the precaution to arrange my fire so as to keep it alive; for the nights were cold, and I had found so much difficulty in kindling it, that I was willing to avoid a second attempt at present.

I now found the half-dry sea-weed of the greatest utility, for it kept up a smouldering fire, which maintained an equable temperature, without consuming much fuel. Although it would not burn alone, with a very small quantity of wood it blazed readily when stirred.

Tranquilly as I sank into slumber, it did not last long; for the wind arose and swept

by the cave, with a melancholy howling sound that awoke me. The heavy sleepiness which had oppressed me, almost without intermission, since my first landing, had now left me, and I lay wakeful and ruminating. The sound of the heavy waves that again broke thundering on the shore, and the sweeping blast that propelled them, recalled to my mind the horrors of the fatal night, and my lost companions whom it had sent to a watery grave.

I thought of the gay hopes, the visions of happiness, with which I had embarked for India,— the expectation of prosperity, and wealth to be acquired, (I knew not exactly how, but certainly to be obtained,) which was to enable me to return, after a time, to my early home, to be again among my dear young sisters — with my loved and venerated father, for whose sakes alone was this ideal wealth precious to me. Imagination brought to my view the scenes

of my childhood, that happy home and its inmates, whom, perhaps, I might never see again.

The picture was too painful. I strove to turn my thoughts into another channel; recalled my expedition to the wood—the sounds I had heard. What were they like? Certainly not a human voice, and yet they were not wholly unlike it.

I had seen no trace of a human footstep, not the slightest indication that any human being had ever traversed the paths I had trodden; and yet it was probable that there were inhabitants, and I resolved the next day to make another, and a bolder attempt to discover them; fully convinced that, in my present situation, it was the best measure I could adopt, to throw myself on their mercy, let them be whom they might.

With this purpose I arose with the sun, and having secured a few of my roasted

eggs about my person, climbed the cliff, and, standing on its summit, again stretched my glance across the ocean; but nothing like a sail met my view. Nothing whatever was visible on it, but the sea-birds, flitting to and fro, or perched on the sunken rocks, which were spread all over the beach.

I now once again descended to the wood, and having "screwed my courage to the sticking place," by constantly repeating to myself that any thing was preferable to this wretched state of ignorance and uncertainty, ventured in. There was no trace or path by which to choose my course, but I had no difficulty in passing, wherever I pleased, for the trees grew in small clumps or were scattered thinly about; with, here and there, patches of underwood, trailing plants, and tufts of the cottony grass.

The soil appeared to be loose and sandy,

intermixed with shells: but I was not sufficiently disengaged to make very minute observations; for, notwithstanding all my courageous resolutions, I found myself stopping and listening, every half-dozen yards, as I advanced; and my heart beat with terrible violence when my ear was again assailed by the same strange chattering noise I had heard the day before.

My fright, however, did not last long, for the next moment a small blue monkey sprang from the branch of a tree across my path, and disappeared in some brushwood near me.

This was a relief to my fears: I could now account for the noises which had alarmed me, and, as if reassured thereby, I now advanced somewhat more boldly, till I began to feel weary and hungry. The sun was very hot, and I think it was about an hour past noon, when I seated myself on the trunk of a fallen tree, to eat the roasted

eggs with which I had furnished myself.

Every thing was quiet around me: not a branch was waving, no leaf fluttering — not even an insect hummed or buzzed in the silent air. It was a deep and solemn stillness, unbroken, save by the cry or the flitting of a bird, which served but to render the succeeding silence more profound.

In my present forlorn position, this solemn tranquillity seemed to weigh heavily on my spirit, and to excite a melancholy musing. I thought how preferable was the wild screaming and clamour of the sea-gulls, to the dead monotony of a scene where no signs of life were heard; and I half resolved to return at once to a spot so comparatively cheerful.

While I was yet debating whether I should do so, or proceed on my journey, I heard a rustling sound in some brushwood near me. I could see nothing. It

might be a monkey. I arose and advanced, slowly and cautiously peeping into the bushes. A fierce pair of eyes were fixed upon me. An instant I stood motionless with terror, and then prepared to fly: but the word "Stop," caught my ear. Amazed I turned. A human form met my eye—a female—in the dress of my country. Rapidly I approached her.

"Can it be?—Is it possible?" I exclaimed, "No—yes"—It was indeed Mrs. Muggins, but so direfully altered, so pale, so haggard and emaciated, that hardly could I recognise her. I threw my arms round her neck, but not one word could I utter. It was not so with her, for she began to express her astonishment and her joy, with her usual volubility, though not in the loud tone to which I had been accustomed.

But the poor woman could not go on. After rapidly uttering a few audible

phrases, her voice gradually subsided in a feeble muttering, and she sank on the ground, but still clinging to me. She had not fainted, but, weak and feeble from inanition, my sudden appearance had wholly overpowered her.

It is impossible to express the joy I felt at the sight of this lately despised woman—the anxious solicitude with which I watched her movements as I knelt beside her — how my heart swelled with gratitude to Heaven for her preservation: and how did I rejoice, when I found she was suffering from the want of food, that I had yet a part of my provision remaining! Sparingly, however, I bestowed it: knowing that to have done otherwise, in her weak condition, might have been fatal.

She swallowed, ravenously, as much as I thought it right to give, and eagerly held out her hand for more: but I soothed and pacified her, with a promise of another

portion by and by; and had soon the satisfaction of seeing her sink down in a quiet sleep, so quiet, indeed, that more than once I bent anxiously over her, to assure myself she breathed.

Never, I thought, as I watched her, was any one so changed in so short a time. Her fat rosy face was now meagre and bloodless, her eyes sunk and hollow, and her rolly-polly form almost a skeleton. Plentifully did the tears run down my cheeks, as I thought of the suffering which had occasioned this direful alteration. When she awoke, I was collecting wood for my fire, and was a few paces from her. I had intended to carry my bundle to the edge of the cliff, and after throwing it down, to have returned to her; but the moment she missed me, she uttered so sad a cry, that I flew to her and explained what I proposed to do; but she would not consent to my leaving her, even for an instant.

I now gave her another egg, and was delighted to find her much stronger. She would have related to me her adventures since we had been separated: but I would not allow her to do so at present. I had now to consider the possibility of conveying her to my cave, which was desirable on many accounts; but when I recollected the difficulty I found in descending myself, I gave up the idea as hopeless at present. I had, however, unwarily mentioned that my store of eggs was deposited there, and that I must descend to fetch them, when she insisted on going with me, maintaining her purpose so pertinaciously, that I was obliged to give way; and aware we had no time to lose, I assisted her to rise, and giving her all the support I could, we made our way slowly towards the cliff.

Never was any body aided by a more determined spirit than my companion: truly

did she exemplify the adage, "A will finds a way." More than once she sank from weakness and weariness, but still determined to proceed.

We had occupied so much time in our journey, for such I may truly call it, although not perhaps more than a mile in distance, that the sun had set when we arrived at the rocks, and I trembled at the idea of descending, when I saw how exhausted she was. I left her to rest a little, while I went back for the bundle of wood which I had been obliged to abandon on the way. Having thrown them over the cliff, I descended half way in order to facilitate her passage. In spite of all my care and instruction, partly from awkwardness, and partly from weakness, she came tumbling down upon me, and we fell together on the beach; but fortunately without injury, except a few bruises and a slight strain.

As soon as we reached the cave, I roused my fire, which was still smouldering—thanks to the sea-weed—roasted more eggs, and, after eating our supper, we stretched ourselves, heartily weary, but very thankful and comparatively happy, on our sea-grass couch.

Never shall I forget the satisfaction I felt on awaking the next morning at finding her sleeping by my side. I hailed it as an omen of good fortune, and forgot the actual evils of the present in cheerful anticipation of the future.

As soon as we had finished our frugal and spare meal (a strange contrast to the luxurious table to which we had been accustomed on board the Nautilus) we seated ourselves on one of the masses of rock which lay scattered about, and Mrs. Muggins began to relate her adventures after we had been separated, which I shall give as nearly as I can in her own words.

"While I was trying to fasten the shawl," she said, "to something on the deck, which I thought would keep you from sinking,—as for myself, you know I am a pretty good sailor, having been brought up among seafaring people; and poor dear Mr. Muggins, that I shall perhaps never see again, used to say"—Here she made a pause, indulged herself in a hearty fit of tears, and then went on again. "For myself I was not anxious, for I was a good sailor, and could swim; but for you, poor helpless thing, and delicate as a chicken, what was to become of you." Suddenly she paused again, and, looking at me attentively, she said, "You are greatly changed. It is only nine days since we were on board the Nautilus, and you look ten years older. You were always a poor hap'orth of cheese, but now you look as if a good wind would blow you away; and your nice hair, what a mess it is in! Well, as I said, I was trying to tie you to some-

thing on deck; I can't tell what it was, nor whether it did good or harm, but I remember at the time I thought it was the best thing I could do for you."

"Was it something like this?" I said, throwing off the sea-weed which covered the loose boards of the old packing-case, "to which you tied me, and thus saved me from death?"

"No, no," she replied, "it was Mr. Cummins who saved you, for I saw him myself, holding you by your hair, and trying to reach the ship."

"Mr. Cummins!" I exclaimed: "I neither saw nor heard him.

"May be not," she said. "But as I was going to tell you,—when we shipped the sea, that terrible wave that knocked you down and stunned you—and did not do me much good—when that was gone by, I found him by your side, very anxious about you. He told me they were lowering the boats I

asked him if he thought a boat could live in such a sea. He did not say either yes or no, but replied, 'It is the only chance we have, for the ship won't float much longer. Then he took you up in his arms, intending, I believe, to carry you to the boat; when down comes just such another wave upon us, and away we went right over the ship's side into the sea.

"At first I hardly knew where I was, but in a minute I began to strike out, and try to make my way round to the boats; but I was so buffeted by the waves that I almost lost my senses. At last I got hold of one of the boats and got in. God knows how—but there I was, with many others—sailors, or gentlemen, I can't say which, but they were men. A great many more were ready to come down.

"Just then there was a cry, 'All hands to the pumps,' and I thought I heard, too, somebody say, 'The leak is stop'd.' In a jiffy up

starts the men who were sitting in the boat, and were up the ship's side again in a twinkling. All but one. Just as he was springing after the others, the boat broke away, and drifted off before he could get hold of an oar; and when he did get hold of one, it was of just as much use to him as a spoon would have been. So when he found it so, he leaps overboard and swims for the ship. Whether he reached it I cannot say, for I was thinking more about myself and what I had best do, for the boat was drifting away at a great rate.

"At this very minute I saw the chief officer, Mr. Cummins, close by me, holding your hair and keeping your head above water. I screamed out to him, and tried to turn the boat with all my might. In a very little while I lost sight of you. Indeed, the morning was so dark that nothing could be seen a yard off. Well, as I said, away I went, and sadly was I pelted up and down

—that is, the boat—among the waves. In a little bit she ran bump ashore, and turned pretty near keel upwards, sending me right into the water. But I kept fast hold of her, righted her, and got in again.

"While I sat thinking what I should do, I saw the tide was ebbing, and the wind sinking with it, and that the boat was aground, in a muddy ooze.

"When the day got a little clearer, I could see I was on a low marshy coast. I had no great inclination to stay where I was, for I was wet, and cold, and tired. But how I was to get on shore, I could not devise; for I put an oar down to try, and I found the mud so deep and soft, that I dared not get upon it.

"After looking about me a bit, I saw that here and there was a little sea grass growing; and I remembered, when I was a child, and I often went out to pick up periwinkles, we always found the sea-grass gave us a safe

footing. Taking the two oars, I laid them down as a sort of bridge, and got out of the boat. As soon as I had crossed I took them up again. In this way I went on bridging over the soft mud, till the ground became firm enough to bear me.

"Thus I got ashore, and crossing the marsh found my way to the wood, where you saw me. By the time I got there, the weather had cleared up. The sun broke out warm and comfortable. I was terribly tired. I think it must have been about four o'clock in the afternoon. I lay down and fell fast asleep. When I awoke, I got up and looked about me for something to eat; but I found nothing but some red berries, which grew near the marsh, something like cranberries.

"When it began to get dark, I got up into a tree, and tied myself to a branch with a handkerchief, for fear I should fall down in my sleep, and be eaten up by some

wild beast. I need not have tied myself, for I could not sleep a wink.

"The next night I found a better place. An old tree that was quite hollow made me a very comfortable resting place, and I slept there every night; but I never found any thing to eat except the berries I spoke of, and the sweet buds of a tree, which were pleasant to the taste; but they did not satisfy my hunger. I had been asleep when I saw you, and could hardly then believe I was awake. I knew you, but you are much altered."

During this recital I was variously affected: my feelings were greatly interested, and my gratitude excited, by the efforts that had been made to save me, by two persons on whose kindness I had no sort of claim.

Mr. Cummins, as first officer of the Nautilus, had always been prompt and active in securing me every sort of accommodation, to

which, as a female passenger, I was entitled; but he had never given me reason to believe he entertained any sentiments for me, warmer than that general good-will, which men commonly entertain for women who are not disagreeable. In my present forlorn and desolate position, it needed little to make my tears flow, and I wept at the idea that I should, in all probability, never see him again to thank him for his kindness

But the whole narrative filled my heart with feelings of the bitterest regret; since I drew from it the conclusion, that my unfortunate companion and myself were the victims of precipitation. Had we remained on board the ship, we should now, most likely, have been quietly pursuing our voyage.

I knew it was idle and useless to indulge ideas like these; yet, in spite of the efforts I made to chase them from my mind, they haunted my imagination, and destroyed the

comparative tranquillity I might have otherwise felt. We now held a consultation on our situation and prospects. Heaven knows, they were gloomy enough. On comparing notes of our separate experience, we came to the conclusion that we were on an island, and that we were its only inhabitants—at least neither of us had seen a trace of any human being but ourselves.

We decided that our only hope of escape from this desert place was by the arrival of some vessel that accident or design might bring to its shores; and that we might lose no chance of attracting the attention of any mariner who might approach, we determined to hoist a flag on one of the trees in the wood. To this purpose I dedicated my shawl, although I could ill spare it. The flag-staff was to be furnished by one of the oars with which Mrs. Muggins had crossed the muddy plain.

I also undertook to make a placard, by

knocking the old packing-case to pieces, and employing a part of it for that purpose. Before I could write on it, however, I must fabricate both pens and ink. This I had no doubt of being able to do, for feathers were plentiful enough for pens. The old case had nails, which, with some bark from the trees in the wood, would make ink. But for the present all this was postponed to satisfy a more pressing demand; this was a covering for my head, the sun being now overpoweringly hot. Mrs. Muggins was fortunately provided with a bonnet, which, though crushed and broken, served to shade her face; but I had none.

So we set off to the wood, and returned laden with cotton grass, the inner and external bark of some trees, which we found hanging in slips from some broken boughs. Fortune favoured us, for, having no other instrument than an old nail, we should otherwise have been greatly embarrassed.

It was nearly dark before we got back, and poor Mrs. Muggins had another tumble down the cliff, and hurt her arm. She had not yet recovered strength enough for such an expedition: but she would not consent to wait till she was stronger. Indeed, I was surprised to find afterwards, when she was no longer weak, that she was much less expert at a scramble than myself.

The next morning I set to work with my hat; and never, certainly, were such strange materials collected for a piece of millinery, and which would have foiled, I think, the efforts of every priestess of the toilet in London or Paris, to have given them a reasonable shape. While I was thus occupied, Mrs. Muggins was knocking the old chest to pieces, and carefully collecting the nails and pieces of iron hoops with which the loose planks had been fastened together. Never before, I am sure, was an old deal box so precious and so prized as that!

Never was an article so apparently worthless found so useful as it proved to us.

My hat was at last finished, light and shady—fabricated, not with the materials I destined to that purpose, but with the sea-grass which strewed the beach, and some pliant twigs of wood.

The next day I left Mrs. Muggins still busy with the box. It was a work of time and patience to effect its demolition with no other implements than a large stone and a nail.

With these she was hammering away when I went off in search of some shells to make my ink in. I sauntered along the sandy beach, picking up a shell occasionally, and wandered on, always hoping to find some larger ones, till I came to the western horn of the bay, where the sandy beach terminated; and, although it was low water, I could go no further on account of the soft unsafe ground; so I returned.

Mrs. Muggins had succeeded in dismantling the chest, in part, and was now busy with two pieces of deal, in which she was trying to make holes with the nail—no easy task. I inquired what she was making.

"A pair of 'splatches,' or mud shoes," she replied, "for, to tell you the truth, I don't much like tumbling over that cliff—some day I shall break my neck. Now if I had a pair of mud shoes, I could go round the rocks. When I was a girl, we used to go 'pinpatching,' as we called hunting for periwinkles. We had all of us mud shoes, and with them we could go any where."

I suggested that by heating the nail hot she would make the holes more easily.

"Truly," she said, "I knew as much as that myself, but I suppose you would not like to lay hold of the hot nail with your fingers."

"Can't you bend a piece of the iron hoop,

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or a piece of thick bark, for a pair of tongs?"

She seemed to catch eagerly at this idea, and I quitted her again, to wander to the other extremity of the beach, for the shells which I had hitherto seen were far too small to satisfy me.

At last I found two or three of a larger size, and was about to turn back, when a strange screaming noise attracted my attention, and, on looking round, I saw some birds much larger than any I had hitherto seen. I believe they were ospreys or sea eagles. They were perched on a mass of something which lay at the water's edge, sopping in the rising tide, and which they were tearing with beak and claws, and screaming horribly. On my approach they paused to look at me, but with eyes so fierce, that I hesitated whether I should advance to gratify my curiosity, or leave them to feast undisturbed.

But at length one, and then the other, unfolded their broad wings, rose on the air, and sailed slowly away.

I now saw it was a human body, swollen to an enormous size, bloated and loathsome. I came upon it suddenly; my sight and my sense of smell were grievously offended. I turned away and retreated. For a few minutes I felt sick and weak. I seated myself a short time, and then returned to Mrs. Muggins. As I walked back, I recollected I had seen a horn sheath lying beside this hideous object, to the neck of which it was attached by a leathern thong. It now struck me that this sheath perhaps contained a knife!

I related my adventure to my companion, who was kneeling on the sand, still busy with her "splatches." When I mentioned the horn sheath, and what I thought it contained, she started up, reproachfully exclaiming, "A knife? yes certainly it was a

knife! and you left it there, although you know how I have fretted that I forgot to put my pockets on, that night I left the ship. If I had my pocket, I should have had needles and scissors, and, above all, a knife."

Before I could reply, she had started off, and soon came back with the prize. It was a large Spanish knife, with a long and sharp blade, but very rusty. She soon cleaned it, and set to work again *con amore.* She had also brought a checked shirt, which she had stripped from the body, and now laid to soak at the water's edge, secured by a large stone, to prevent the waves from floating it away.

By the evening she had completed the task—and so impatient to make use of them, that I could hardly prevail on her to wait till the next morning; for she now confessed that she had worked so hard at them, that she might not only avoid the toil of climb-

ing the rocks, but also in hopes that by their aid she might be able to find the boat.

"The boat!" I exclaimed, "and what could you do with the boat?"

"May be catch some fish," she replied, "for, to speak the truth, I am tired of these bird's eggs. I think we might make a net with some of this inner bark, which is tough enough to hold any thing."

"Make me a pair of mud shoes," I said, "and I will go with you. I cannot consent to you going alone."

This she agreed to do, and set to work again with such hearty good will, that they were begun and finished in a few hours. There was not, in truth, either much skill or much labour required in the manufactory; for they were nothing more than two deal planks from the old chest, about two feet long, and half as wide, attached to the feet with thongs, like skates. It was impossible to keep her quiet after they were ready, and

the tide out, which would otherwise have barred our passage. So with our mud clogs on our feet, we set off on our boat-catching expedition, although the day was already half gone; because, the next day being Sunday, Mrs. M. (who always kept the day most religiously) objected to occupy it for this purpose, or wait for the more fitting Monday.

The tide being out, we passed without difficulty round the western horn of the bay, where the rocks bore the appearance of a ruined wall, and, crossing the soft muddy ooze, recently covered with water, got on to the firm ground, and entered the wood.

It was slow and toilsome work to travel with these queer but most useful and necessary appendages to our ordinary chassure, from which we now gladly released ourselves, and sat down to rest at the place where the oars had been left, and still lay,

one of which was to make us a flag-staff, unless we should succeed in finding the boat. In this case, I suppose we must have sought a substitute.

We had hardly sat five minutes, when Mrs. M. said, "Come, let us go again: if I sit here any longer, I shall get melancholy." After a short pause, she added, "It is just a fortnight since I came here first, fagged and worn out, but never dreaming that I was alone in such a desert place."

She then began again to speak of many little occurrences of that eventful day and night; and I believe would have consumed the whole of this one in talking, had I not in my turn proposed moving; when she finished with—"After all, I am a wicked creature to grumble, instead of being thankful to God for sending us both safe on shore, although we have no good dinners and pleasant company, as we had on board the Nautilus, and perhaps never shall have again."

We passed the wood, making our way towards the northern part of the Island, where she had landed. The ground was marshy and swampy—in places boggy and unsafe—and we were obliged to put on our fatiguing "splatches" again. Nothing like a boat presented itself. After seeking in vain till the day began to decline, and the tide to flow rapidly in, we agreed to return "*Home*." To reach this home, we must now descend the cliffs, the flowing tide rendering our mud clogs useless. So, striking across the marsh, we made for the highest point of the Island.

On our way we found a good many of the red berries which Mrs. M. had mentioned—a sort of cranberry—the sweet flag (*Calumus Aromaticus*,) and some other plants, of which I knew nothing; and when we came to the drier ground, we found some bulbous roots, not unlike Jerusalem Artichokes, which appeared to have been scratched up and half eaten by some animal.

We collected a few of these to take with us, and, as soon as we reached our cave, roused up our fire and roasted some of them. It was quite dark before they were ready, and we ate them sparingly, lest they might contain some unwholesome property. They were very good—not unlike artichokes in flavour. No ill consequences followed our repast. We went to bed delighted with our discovery, determined to set off in the morning, on Monday, in search of a further supply. But first we must have something to put them in; so we went to work in making a couple of baskets, which took us half a day before they were finished; but we did not regret the time spent on them, as we found them afterwards so very useful to us.

The "Jerusalems," as we called them, grew in a loose friable sandy loam, so that they were not difficult to extract from their bed. With the help of a piece of iron and the precious knife, we obtained a good

many, leaving many more which had not yet finished their growth. In the course of our rambles after them, we approached nearer the eastern part of the Island, which we had not yet visited. We found the soil here, as it descended to the sea, a tenacious clay, baked and fissured by the heat of the sun in some places; in others, covered with shallow pools of sea water.

Round the edge of one of them, we found some sparkling crystalline substance, which proved to be salt. This was another precious discovery; and we collected it with great satisfaction, for we were greatly in need of this.

Laden with our treasures, we went back chatty and cheerful. So true it is, that happiness and misery, riches and poverty, are all comparative. We had wanted every thing, and were now comparatively rich with our eggs, Jerusalems, and salt.

What a supper we made that night! No

Alderman ever sat down to a city feast with more satisfaction than we did to our simple repast, over which we remained gossiping as quietly as if we had been surrounded with all the comfort and safety of civilized society.

Although we confidently anticipated the arrival of some vessel, by which we should be ultimately restored to society and our friends, we agreed that common prudence dictated the utmost exertion and care, on our part, in seeking for and securing the scanty food the place afforded, as a provision for the future. Accordingly, the next morning we went off again, intending to pass, as soon as the tide should ebb, round the rocks at the eastern point, where we had not yet been.

When we came to the end of the beach, we found we must yet wait a short time ere we could safely pass.

We seated ourselves at the base of the

cliffs, which here rose steep, smooth, and almost perpendicular, to watch the waves as they slowly receded from the shore.

It was here where I had found the eagles at their filthy and unholy meal. The skeleton had probably been washed away by the sea, for there were now no traces of it. This was not a place to excite cheerful ideas, and we gladly rose to quit it.

We had gone only a few paces, when Mrs. M. called out, "Look! what's that?" pointing to something near the base of the cliff. We advanced to examine the object which had attracted her attention, some metallic substance glittering in the sun. It was the corner of a brass-bound box, completely "sanded up," as the sailors call it, with the exception of the point which had caught her eye.

Precious as our time was, on account of the tide, we were yet too curious to quit this *trouvaille* without some further exami-

nation, and exerted ourselves considerably to disinter it; but having nothing to assist us, we agreed to abandon our prize for the present, but not till we had partially uncovered it, and ascertained that it was locked. However, as the lid was split across, we did not despair of being able to come at the contents, whatever they might be, when we had more leisure for the task.

So we passed round the rocks, and quitting our clogs, got on to the dry ground; wandering about in search of those precious roots. In this way we passed from the eastern to the western part of the Island, and were approaching the woody point, when our course was intercepted by a creek, or inlet of the sea, in which were springing fresh and green young reeds of a gigantic size. While many of the pipes, or hollow stems, of a former growth, were still standing erect and perfect among them; others lay whole, or broken, on the banks.

In passing round the head or extreme point of this creek, we put aside the branches of some thick low trees which obstructed our way, and suddenly we found ourselves at the entrance of a cavern, the floor of which was overgrown with large moss, and strewed with leaves. A glimmering of light from the other end induced us to proceed. The moss, damp and cool, was exceedingly pleasant to our feet, chafed and heated by the wearying splatches, and our subsequent ramble.

We did not stay long to indulge ourselves in such a luxury, but passed through to another long and narrow cave, the floor of which, ascending considerably, at length terminated in a sort of gallery, partially lighted by a fissure, or opening, in the rock. I was greatly surprised, on peeping through, to see our own little beach, with its broken rocks, toppling about, and the sea birds perched upon them, or riding like little ves-

sels at anchor upon the undulating waves, on which the evening sun was gleaming bright and beautiful. Our time was too precious, on account of the rising tide, to allow us to linger here, and we hastened back down the passage, and through the mossy cave, close to the mouth of which, and very little way from the salt water creek, rose a tiny spring of the clearest and freshest water.

This was again a precious discovery to us; for the supply of water we had hitherto had, had been derived from a land spring, and had already shown symptoms of failing altogether. With thankful hearts, we each took a draught, and went our way rejoicing. We had delayed so long, and had so many things to carry, that when we put on our mud clogs to cross the oozy ground, the tide was already rippling up in little waves across our path, forcing us to wait till they again receded, and then stride on with speed and precipitation, lest we should be cut off

from advance or retreat. When, at length, we did reach the solid ground, we were quite exhausted with fatigue and fear. This violent exertion was succeeded by a chill, that all the fire we could make could hardly dispel; and the next morning we were listless and idle—creeping up and down the beech, or lying in the sun on the hot sand—but exceedingly hungry. We ate at least twice as much food as we usually allowed ourselves. However, towards the afternoon we took courage, and went off after the box we had discovered the day before. We scraped away the sand, and finding it furnished with handles, we carried it between us to the cave by short journeys, for it was very heavy; and then set to work with a sharp edged flint for a wedge, and a larger one for a hammer, to finish the split across the lid, which accident apparently had begun.

I hardly know what we had hoped, or

expected to find; but certainly we were greatly disappointed when we found it filled with stoppered bottles, powders, and packages. It was a medicine chest, and contained, besides the ordinary catalogue of drugs, in the lower part, an electric machine, which appeared to have suffered as well as some of the bottles, by the concussion which had split the lid. I confess I was indeed disappointed, when we had finished our examination, not to find needles and thread, as I had expected—for I knew surgeons often employed them.

However, we found many things of great service to us; for instance, two pairs of scissors, rolls of lint, and calico for bandages; and many of the surgical instruments we also forced into our service. Just as we had replaced the things in the chest, the sky clouded over suddenly, and there came on a tremendous storm of wind and rain, pelting right into our cave; and although we crept

to the farthest end, we were scarcely sheltered.

While we sat crouching in a very uncomfortable position, and heartily wishing ourselves in the back caves, (as we called those we had discovered the day before,) Mrs. Muggins, pointing to a sort of crack, or breach, in the rock, declared it would not be difficult to open a communication between them; insisting on it, that she had observed a similar crack in the mossy cave. Although I did not altogether agree with her in opinion on the relative position of the caverns, still they were certainly very near each other, for the view was nearly the same, and the experiment was well worth making on many accounts.

So off we set again, early the next morning, to investigate anew the recently found premises. In scrambling about the rocks, we discovered on a ledge, or natural terrace, a plant growing, of the gourd tribe, a sort

of calabash, with fruit in various stages of maturity. Some of them small and green, others nearly ripe, and a few quite dry, with the rind hardened into a shell-like substance, tough and hard, which we found of great use to us, serving as cups and basins: but the pulp was good for nothing. The seed was probably brought by a bird, for we never found but this one plant. Marking the spot, we left them for the present, to pursue the project on which we were bent.

We found a crack, or fissure, not in the mossy cave, but in the passage leading from that to the upper one; and by dint of the most untiring patience, and the most persevering labour, succeeded at last in opening a communication.

Mrs. M. was a woman of dull and heavy intellect; yet, I have no doubt, she would often have carried out a plan, where a person of more brilliant abilities would have failed, by dint of everlasting perseverance.

For two whole days she grubbed away, incessantly digging, chipping, and scraping, with her miserable tools, scarcely allowing herself time to take a morsel of food: I lending all the aid I could. On the third day of this unceasing toil, she was amply rewarded; for she shouted, clapped her hands, and chattered like a magpie, when she saw me pass through the rugged, irregular opening, although she could not follow me; for I was then slight made and slim, and passed easily where her more sturdy frame could not. But she went to work again with fresh courage, and in a short time she also could squeeze through.

We had thus made an enormous step in security and comfort, and to the general improvement of our situation. We agreed we had now only carefully to collect, and store up, every thing we could find in the shape of food, and wait patiently till it should please Providence to release us from

our island prison. It was not without reason we rejoiced in this convenient addition to our dwelling; for the very day after we had removed our sea-weed, bedding, and cotton grass coverings, our provisions, &c., to the gallery, or upper chamber, as we called it, which, spreading right and left, gave us ample space for stowage,—that very day, towards evening, a storm arose, that would have drenched us and our provisions, had we been in the lower cave; but from the upper one, we could observe its furious career unharmed.

It was a grand and awful spectacle to see the wild waves riding over the broken rocks, heaving into mountains of foam, and thundering on the beach with a constant, ceaseless din, till the night closed in, dark as I ever saw one; and yet the foaming waves were visible in those mighty bounds, like hoary headed giants battling with each other, and howling with fury in the fierce

contention. There was no lightning nor thunder, but from time to time a torrent of rain.

Mrs. Muggins had no taste for the picturesque. She was soon asleep, leaving me in quiet possession of the narrow opening, from which I watched, occasionally feeling the spray dashed in my face, distant as I was from the water. Towards morning, the storm subsided, the air became calm and still, and the sun arose unclouded.

We found on going out, that the tide was down, having left on the beach great quantities of sea-weed and grass, with a good many shell-fish scattered up and down. We made our breakfast on some of these, then went out to search for more, and were lucky enough to make a more important capture. I had advanced only a short distance from our cave, when a shapeless mass of something which lay on the sand, to my surprise, moved off on my approach, and scuttled to the sea.

I had never seen any thing like it before, and stood gazing at it with idle curiosity. But Mrs. Muggins, who was some way behind me, no sooner caught sight of it, than she sprang nimbly forward, intercepted its passage to the water, and turned it on its back. I saw, by the glow of satisfaction on her face, that she had victimized something of importance; but certainly the idea of eating such a thing as that never would have come into my head, if she had not joyfully exclaimed, "A turtle, a turtle! I am sure it weighs twenty pounds."

She readily undertook the office of both butcher and cook, and in a very short time the flesh of the animal was hanging in strips to dry in the sun, only allowing a small portion of it to our present sustenance. Besides the dried meat, which was now hung up in the dry upper cave, we had a noble basin, furnished by the shell of the turtle, which served us for many purposes:

among others a wash tub, for our single suit of linen.

We had now been nearly a month on the Island, and, although our first glance in the morning, and our last at night, had ever been turned to the sea, we had never seen a sail, I believe, in reality; but many times we had deluded ourselves for a short time, by fancying we had—our short-lived joy ending each time in bitter disappointment. It was now the fourth Sunday since we left the ship. We had finished the scanty and insipid meal we called dinner, and which Mrs. Muggins had swallowed grumbling, and dissatisfied—as she herself would have said—"like a cat eating lizards,"—as she usually did on a Sunday. On other days she was too busy to find time for grumbling or lamenting. We had dined, as I said, and I proposed we should go to the wood, which we could now reach without the fatigue of employing our mud shoes, or

scrambling over the cliff, to get some sticks for our fire. But it was Sunday! She would not go.

I knew not why—unless it was, that we had never lost sight of each other since we first met in the wood,—I was unwilling to leave her,—I began to say something about rational and irrational religion, and the harmless occupation of collecting a little fire-wood, of which we were in need. Finding, however, I was only embarking in a useless and disagreeable *polemique*, I left her sitting on the beach, singing a psalm, and went alone.

I had scarcely entered the wood, when I heard a sound, so like a human voice, that I involuntarily started, and paused. At the same instant a monkey, much larger than any I had yet seen, leaped out of a clump of trees, and sprang across my path.

"Strange," I said to myself, "that monkeys and men should so much resemble each

other!" I was not, however, quite satisfied, and stood still some time to listen. I heard the rustling of the branches, and the cracking of the sticks the monkey displaced in his flight, but nothing more. I now proceeded to collect my wood; and having in my course fallen in with a nice little lot of cranberries, I also gathered them, and then sauntered leisurely back, sufficiently laden to make my pace slow.

I passed through the mossy cave, and, depositing my sticks in the passage, was about to squeeze myself through the narrow opening into the beach cavern, at the mouth of which I had left my companion sunning herself and singing, when a step caught my ear, which had something strange in its sound. I listened. Wholly unlike the short quick shuffle of Mrs. Muggins, it sounded more like the long measured stride of a sentinel on guard—heavy and firm. It was certainly the tread of a man.

The opening in the rock was so situated as to allow me no view of the beach. I mounted softly to the upper cave, and looked out towards the sea; but the overhanging rocks prevented a sight of any thing immediately beneath. I could only listen. The heavy step continued, and once or twice I caught a sort of moaning sound—a tone of lamentation.

It was impossible to remain in this state of suspense and anxiety. Hastily seizing my mud clogs, I crept through the back cave into the wood, intending to round the rocks, where I could see the whole extent of the beach, and every thing on it. In the pre-occupation of my mind, I had not thought of the tide, and had fastened the splatches to my feet before I was roused by the sight of the flowing waves, which rendered them useless. For nearly an hour I was obliged to wait before I could pass.

An hour under such circumstances seemed to be endless.

While I sat impatiently watching the receding water, I reflected how eagerly we had been wishing for the arrival of strangers; and now that I had reason to believe they were actually come, I was in fear and perplexity, not daring to advance near enough to get a sight of them, lest they also should see me. I now set a few steps on the mud, rounded a projecting portion of the rock, and beheld a boat moored in a sort of little cove just at the corner of the beach, and yet not visible from it.

Never before had the idea of any thing but good presented itself to my mind, as the result of a ship or boat arriving. Alas, how had my opinion changed within the last few hours! The sun was now setting; its sinking beams fell across the boat and a part of the beach. There was no one visible in the

boat. It had no deck, but a mast, with a sail furled round it, lay across it. A pair of oars, and a bundle of something which looked like clothes, were in the bottom.

I passed round it hastily, intent on getting sight of the beach, which I knew a few more steps would enable me to do, when I was astonished to see what I had taken for a bundle of clothes was a child. Too anxious to stop even a moment, I advanced to another rugged projection of the rocky wall, which guarded the beach from the inroads of the sea; from behind this I could see the whole extent of the sandy shore without showing myself.

A tall stout man, with the dress and complexion of a Moor, was striding up and down past the outer cave; near which, stretched on the sand, I could see the legs of another, whose head was concealed by a recess of the rock, and beside him, bound, as it appeared to me, my poor friend, Mrs. Muggins.

While I stood gazing in grief and perplexity, wholly undecided as to what step I could, or ought to take, I observed the one who was acting as sentinel while the other slept, to stretch his arms and yawn. His step began to intermit in its regularity. Occasionally he stopped, and at length seated himself on the ground, yawned again, and in the next minute he, too, was lying at his length on the sand beside the other.

From the evident signs of weariness he had betrayed, I had no doubt he was, or would be soon, asleep. In the approaching twilight I could surely find some means to liberate my unfortunate friend, who it appeared had been seized and bound during my absence by these men, whose intentions towards her were certainly evil, or they would not have treated her thus. I now hastened back. In again passing the boat, I recollected the child I had seen in it. I stopped to look—it was a hand-

some and interesting girl, apparently ten or eleven years old. Her hands and feet were tied, and she looked pale and languid.

"These men are villains," I said to myself, "this is another of their victims. I will at least unbind her, and set her free to use her limbs!" This was soon done, and I was about to quit her, when the expression of the poor child's face changed so suddenly from joy and hope, to mute despair, that I involuntarily paused.

What else could I do but hurry away to the assistance of my unhappy friend. Situated as I was now, to encumber myself with this child would be the height of folly and imprudence.

"No; I ought not, must not, aggravate the difficulties by which I am beset." I was again about to go. The poor little thing, with a faint and plaintive cry, now sank again to the bottom of the boat, apparently quite exhausted. My heart and my conscience

both reproached me. My resolution was taken in an instant. I took her up in my arms, and, setting my foot firmly on the mud, bore her slowly but steadily over it. It was heavy and dangerous work; had I not been greatly excited, I could not have done it; but I said to myself as I went, "It would not have been right to refuse protection to this helpless creature; I will do my duty come what may." On reaching the solid ground, I laid her down, while I removed the clogs from my feet, and now again spoke to her. She did not understand me, nor did I comprehend what she said to me, but I thought it was the Spanish language she spoke, as in truth it was. Leaving my clogs, I took her up again and carried her through the mossy cave to the upper one, and laid her on the heap of grass which served us for a bed. Placing my finger on my lips as she was about to speak, in sign of silence, I left her and went to the

opening, which we called the window, to look out and listen.

The sun had set. The evening was calm and still. The sea birds had retired to their holes in the cliffs. No sounds came to my ear but the murmur of the waves, and nearer to me a sort of snorting, which announced that one, at least, of the men was sleeping. I descended, and, slipping through the opening we had made, softly and cautiously advanced to the place where they lay. I found, as I expected, Mrs. Muggins with her hands and feet bound, and a cord, which was round her arm, was also fastened to that of the man beside whom she lay, so that the slightest movement on her part must have roused him. The men were both asleep. She heard my step, light and cautious as it was. An exclamation was on the point of escaping her, but a moment's reflection, on her part, and my finger on my lips, strangled it into a groan.

When I was close to her, I bent down and said softly, "knife,"—"scissors," for I remembered to have left them in a basket beside her.

I thought she did not hear me, for the only answer was another low groan. I repeated the whispered words. — "Gone, taken away," she said. This was dreadful news. I had been so sure of being able to cut the cords which bound her; and, once safe through the crevice of the lower cave, she would have been comparatively secure in the upper one. But now it appeared these ruffians had seized our only cutting instruments. What could I do?

I recollected the medicine chest, and hoping to find some instrument which might serve my purpose, I softly retreated. It was still at the back of the beach cave, being much too large to pass the opening. Alas! it had already been ransacked by these robbers. Not an instrument of any sort

remained. At the instant I ascertained this, it came into my head that the mineral acids, which I knew were in some of the bottles, would at least partially supply their place. It was getting dusky, but there was yet light enough for me to find what I wanted. With a bottle of nitric acid in my hand, listening, I again approached them.

Fortunately these Moors, or whatever they were—for this I never knew—had apparently been worn down by fatigue, for

"They slept as the weary sleep."

I moistened a small portion of the cord, which fastened his captive to him, with the corrosive fluid, and in a few minutes it rotted asunder without disturbing him. I now applied to the ligature round her feet, hoping to be able to untie it, but this would have taken too much time, and I was trembling with fear and impatience. Again I applied to the bottle, but now with greater care and

caution, lest I should let the acid fall on her feet.

The instant she found them free, without waiting to have her hands released, she arose; but whether from giddiness of the head, or numbness of the limbs (both combined perhaps,) she reeled, floundered against me, and knocked me right on to the man to whom she had been tied.

The concussion roused him. He awoke. My heart knocked violently against my ribs, but I had just sense enough left me to know my only chance of escape lay in remaining quite still beside him. He half raised himself, looked round, and then finding everything nearly in the same position as before, with a muttered execration (as I guessed from the tone in which it was uttered,) laid down again and was soon asleep.

I now ventured to raise my head and look round. Mrs. Muggins had contrived to scramble to the back of the cave. I got

up and crept gently to her, and we both passed through the opening into the back cave. We were now in comparative safety, and most thankful for our escape; but we did not venture to speak until we were at the farther end, when Mrs. Muggins exclaimed, "What a lucky thing it was that I knocked you into my place beside that tawny devil, for I never could have lain still, as you did, till he was asleep again."

She could give no account of how or when these men had arrived; for she had fallen asleep, it appeared, soon after I left her. From this sleep the grasp of the "tawny devils" had roused her: who, after eating the small remains of our dinner, which had been left on one of the baskets, and seizing every thing the other contained, then set about to hunt for more. She went on talking, without pause or intermission, sometimes in a low voice, and sometimes so loud that I was fearful these men would

hear her; for our only hope of ultimate escape lay in our remaining undiscovered.

She was always loquacious, but now there was a wild excitement in her manner that alarmed me. Her face was flushed, and her eyes sparkled. In vain I tried to keep her quiet; she seemed to have lost all power of self-control. Our situation was again becoming desperate. If I did not find means to tranquillize her we should be lost. I seized one of her hands, and while I grasped it tightly I said, with a low, but stern voice, "You will *not* be quiet! You wish to bring destruction on us; you will destroy us both!"

She was startled by the energetic tone with which I uttered these few words, and remained quite silent for a short time. She then began again. The fright she had suffered had made her half crazy. I began to be greatly alarmed. There was yet light enough to allow me to seek and find some

opium. The case was desperate. I could not wait to weigh or measure, but gave her at hazard such a dose as I believed sufficient to stupify her. She swallowed the nasty stuff with the docility of a child, when I insisted on her doing so, though she at first refused it. I watched her anxiously for a full half hour, I think, before it appeared to have any effect, when she became suddenly silent; her eyelids dropped, and she sank down on the moss and leaves, where, damp as it was, I was forced to leave her, and feel my way to the upper cave, where I had left the child I had rescued.

She had fallen asleep, and was, happily, still sleeping, so that I had now time to reflect on the strange circumstances in which I found myself. My heart was heavy, and my limbs were weary, but my mind was too restless to allow me repose. I looked out through the opening in the rock. The moon was rising. Its calm,

soft light silvered the quiet sea and rocky beach. The men were sleeping, too, for I could still hear their heavy breathing close beneath me, although I could not see them.

The first thing they would set about on awaking would doubtless be to recover their captives. They would make an active search. I trembled to think of our fate, if they should discover us, which it was possible they might. I fell into a singular train of thought; I said to myself, "These men are stronger in muscular power than I am, but they have no other superiority. They are my enemies, and will cause our destruction if they find us. Why should I not secure our safety by destroying them? Knowledge is power; I have knowledge; and accident, or a protecting Providence, has furnished me with weapons unerringly fatal, if I choose to employ them. I have but to put some acid into the great turtle shell, which is filled with water,

and pour it on to the chalk rubbish among which their heads are now lying, and thereby convert it into a 'grotto del cane,' from which they would never rise living men. I could approach them quietly, and put into their mouths a dose that would take from them at once all power over those masculine muscles, and kill them. Why should I not do it? Were a man in my place he would not hesitate; he would think it his duty to do so. What would be right for a man to do cannot be wrong for a woman: *ergo*, I *ought* to put an end to their existence."

This was fine reasoning, a bold and simple plan of defence; unhappily, I did not find it so easy to carry it out. There was an impediment I had not thought of. I had reasoned like a man, but a woman must act. My woman's heart recoiled from such a deed, my woman's hand refused to execute it. I had always had

an extreme aversion to kill even an insect. It could not be done; but I could and would give them a dose of something that would derange their health, and, in their ignorance of the cause of the malady, leave them no inclination to seek for their captives, but drive them with disgust from the island.

I felt assured they were *both* asleep, and I descended in search of a certain tasteless powder which I proposed to administer to them as I could; unfortunately, although the moon was up, the back of the cave, where the medicine chest stood, was in deep shadow, and I could not, in the dark, find it. I must wait till the moon was higher. I, however, ventured to go far enough to look at them—they were, as I believed, asleep, and both lying with their mouths half open. Could I have found the medicine, what an opportunity was this. I had only to drop a small pinch into each, and

these strong men would have been, in half an hour, weak as babies. But there was no light, no fire, no means to distinguish what I required, from twenty other things the chest contained.

Passing again through the narrow opening, I sat down to wait and watch. Unfortunately, I was exceedingly weary. The excitement, which had hitherto kept me active, and restless, subsided in the quiet stillness of every thing around me. A heavy drowsiness benumbed my faculties and I fell asleep.

When I woke, it was still dark, darker than before, for the moon had set. From a cool freshness in the air, and a slight movement among the sea birds, I knew that day was about to dawn. I regretted greatly the opportunity I had thus lost. While I sat still, ruminating on the mischance, the first beams of morning gleamed athwart the cavern, and lo! I was in possession of what

I wanted; but it was now too late. I looked out, the men had changed the posture in which they had been lying. The medicine could not be administered by the summary process I had devised; but I knew that Mrs. Muggins, to avoid the necessity of cooking on a Sunday, had prepared more food than we had consumed. I looked for, and found, some. Into a portion of this I put the powder, and placing it in a basket, I pushed it gently to a spot where they could not fail to see it.

The bright light of morning roused them from their sleep, and soon I heard their footsteps on the beach, and their voices in conversation with each other. These sounds were, not long after, succeeded by others, which sufficiently indicated their having taken the breakfast I had provided for them. They were not pleasant to listen to. I retreated to the back cave to look after Mrs. Muggins. She lay just as I had

left her, inanimate and lifeless as a log. I quitted her, well satisfied that *she*, at least, would be quiet for many hours to come. I then went to the little girl; she was rejoiced to see me. With my finger again on my lip, in sign of silence, I approached her with a small portion of food. She was hungry, and swallowed it eagerly—strange breakfast as it must have been to her. The warm hearted child then threw her arms round my neck and kissed me heartily.

She was a handsome, intelligent, and interesting creature. I willingly returned her caresses, and thus were formed those strong ties of friendship and affection, which have united us through life, and proved a source of happiness to both. During many succeeding hours, I heard nothing of the men, except a few low moans, or words faintly uttered; but towards the evening their footsteps were again audible on the beach. I looked out cautiously, and

saw them, slowly, and with a languid gait, crossing it towards the point where the boat was moored.

There was a fine breeze blowing, and I rejoiced in the belief they were about to re-embark. The wind soon brought to my ears the sound of the lumbering oars. I ventured to mount the cliff, and after a short interval, my eyes were greeted with the sight of the boat, lessening in the distance, till I could see it no more. Oh, what a long and free breath I drew! What a weight of oppressive fear aud anxiety removed. How quietly—how soundly, did I sleep that night. For two or three days after this happy deliverance, I had two invalids to nurse, while my own frame, I found, had been considerably shaken by the worry, terror, and fatigue, I had undergone. However, my heart was once again light and hopeful. I cheered and comforted my companions as well as I could; and once

again I had the pleasure to see them well enough to assist me in seeking for, and preparing, food.

To have an additional mouth to supply, was a serious affair in circumstances such as ours; yet the more I saw of this interesting child — her intelligence, her gratitude, and affection for me — the more I rejoiced at having rescued her from the terrible situation in which I found her.

At first our intercourse with the young stranger was carried on by signs: but by degrees we came to understand each other perfectly. She knew a little French, with which I was well acquainted. I soon caught, also, a little of her native Spanish, and she a great deal more of our native English; for at her age, a language is acquired with great facility, even by children of ordinary capacity; and Inez de ——, (for so my little friend was called,) possessed an intellect of no common order. The mys-

tery of her arrival on the Island, at least as much as she herself knew of it, she explained to us. She was the only daughter of a Spanish officer. Having lost her mother, she had been under the care of a female relative, who resided on the coast of Spain, in Murcia, and was sharing with the two daughters of this lady the education she was giving them. She had gone to stay a few days, as she had been in the habit of doing, with her nurse, who lived in a cottage on the beach, for the benefit of the sea air; with two servants, a male and female, in attendance. On the night preceding the day fixed for her return to the town of ——, just as they were about to retire to bed, two men suddenly threw open the door of the cottage—terrified the two women, who were then its only inmates, into silence—seized herself, and carried her to a boat, in which they rowed off. They had knocked out the lights on entering the cottage, and the night was too dark to allow

her to see any thing; but she declared that, spite of the terror and confusion of mind such circumstances naturally produced, she recognised the voice of the man-servant who had been sent to protect her. During the night the wind, she said, rose, and blew hard almost all the next day, so that the men were hardly able to manage the boat. Twice in that day one of them took her up, as if he intended to throw her into the sea: but the other prevented him—took her from him, and laid her down in the bottom of the boat again. Then they quarrelled—she thought about herself,—but she knew nothing of the language they spoke.

This was all she could tell of the strange affair. I think it was about a week after the departure of the two most unwelcome guests that, for the first time, we were all three out together seeking for Jerusalems, and had advanced towards the higher part of the land, when Mrs. Muggins suddenly

exclaimed, "Ah, the boat! the boat!—there's the boat!"

I looked in the direction to which she pointed. There, sure enough, at the mouth of what we called the "Reedy Creek," was *the* boat, the identical boat, which had brought those visiters ashore.

With terrified precipitation, I seized the arm of Inez, and, calling to Mrs. Muggins to come back, I retreated towards the entrance of the caverns. On turning to look, when we had nearly reached it, I saw her still standing, and gazing as if fascinated on the same object. She now turned and came up with us, saying, as she did so, "It is not the boat that belonged to the Nautilus."

"No," I replied, "it is the boat which has brought back the Moors, to whom it belongs."

"No," she said steadily, "it brought nobody ashore; that boat came ashore alone! I am sure of it; it drifted into the Reedy

Creek. The tawny devils are gone to Davy Jones. Come down with me and look at it."

She spoke with such an air of certainty —seemed so confident on the subject—that, knowing as I did it was one with which she was well acquainted, and I wholly ignorant, it gave me back my half scattered senses. But still it was possible she might be wrong, and I prevailed on her to keep quiet a little while. For two hours we listened and watched, when, hearing and seeing nothing to alarm us, we went together to the place where it lay.

Every thing about it appeared to be in such disorder, as to sanction the opinion of its being abandoned. The mast, with the sail unfurled, lay across it. One of the oars was broken and stained with blood. There was blood also on the side and in the bottom; in short, there were signs enough that it had been the scene of violence, perhaps

of death; but this we never knew—never more, happily, saw or heard of the ruffians to whom it belonged. From some peculiar circumstances of its position, and the course of the tides, Mrs. Muggins inferred that it had been where it lay four or five days at least, so that it is probable it came on shore again not many hours after their departure.

Besides the things already mentioned, the boat contained a coarse woollen cloak, a pair of shoes, a bag, which had some fragments of biscuit and the remains of a dried fish in it; two leathern bottles, smelling strongly of pitch, one half full of wine. All these things we carried to our rude home, glad enough to get them. In our destitute condition, nothing, however apparently worthless, was too mean to be without its value. The wine was good Malaga; and the shellful that we drank cheered and comforted us greatly. The coarse cloak, too, was a great prize.

The next day, on cleaning out the boat, Mrs. Muggins found one of the shoes of Inez, which had fallen off unnoticed by either of us when I had so hastily snatched her up, and the poor little thing had missed it much. Never was a child more delighted with a new toy than my friend with the boat. The broken oar was replaced by one of those which were still lying in the wood. Notwithstanding our resolution to turn them to some account, we had never found leisure to execute our plans. When the boat was made trim and neat, she set about to construct a fishing net, and actually did not only make one, but caught some fish with it —thanks to her own everlasting perseverance—although furnished with no better materials than the pliant inner bark of the trees in the wood; and, for cutting instruments, a sharp edged flint or a shell, a few nails being now again all the metallic tools in our possession.

They only can know with what a keen relish we sat down to our first meal of broiled fish, who, like us, had during many weeks been badly and sparely fed. I know not whether it was the occasional meal of fish which she now enjoyed, or the delight of catching them; but certain it is that, from this time, Mrs. Muggins began to exhibit something like her former plumpness. She had recovered, indeed, her strength and ordinary health, after I found her in the wood, with astonishing rapidity, but until this time she had been miserably thin.

To celebrate this first successful fishing voyage, the fruits of which we were then enjoying, we had each a glass, or rather shell of wine. Our spirits exhilarated by such unwonted luxuries, something nearly approaching a laugh broke out among us, on hearing some droll mistake made by Inez, in her attempts to speak English. We had often had our cheerful and our

hopeful times in the midst of our desolation and distress; but I think this was the first time any thing like a laugh had echoed in the wild rocks by which we were surrounded, and it seemed to astonish us all. We were all grave again in a minute, as if we had done something wrong; but still the cheering influence of our amended circumstances remained, and we all went to work in repairing the net, (the frail fabric of which had been greatly deranged,) in hopes to obtain, through its agency, another such feast on some future day.

It was not often, however, our appetites were thus pampered; either the fish were scarce, or the nets so inefficient that the meals of fresh fish came like the visits of the angels, and our dried turtle was no treat. We were obliged to soak it for hours before we could cook it, and then it was tough, insipid, and tasteless.

Time passed on, week succeeded week,

and still no prospect of deliverance from our desert prison came. It appeared but too probable that we were condemned to pass the winter in this desolate abode; and it became necessary, therefore, to make the best provision for it we could. Birds' eggs were now but rarely found, but we had been provident while they were plentiful, and had salted a good many of them, by which means we were able to keep them as a provision for the future. We had collected all the Jerusalems we could discover; all we could now do was to smoke the scanty produce of our fishing — that is, what remained after satisfying our immediate wants — and hang the dried fishes in our cave. Mending the nets took up much of our time; and, altogether, we were generally too busy to brood over our misfortunes.

Now and then a fit of despondence seized one of us, and, proving infectious, was

caught by the others, and we wandered about silent and melancholy, or sat down and indulged ourselves with a flood of tears. But this was very rare. Our health, notwithstanding our privations and the many wants which pressed upon us, had been altogether surprisingly good. The weather also had been generally fine. We had many things to be thankful for, and man's best blessing, hope, rarely abandoned us.

Nearly six weeks had elapsed since that eventful and terrible Sunday which brought our young companion to the Island. It was the last week in August, when the weather suddenly changed. The sky became gloomy and overcast with clouds, but which were again dispersed by a brisk gale towards evening. We were upon the heights gazing, as usual, across the sea. I was about to descend, when Mrs. Muggins, with her eyes still straining over the world of waters, said, "It *is* a sail! Surely it is!"

Startled by these words, I also strained my eyes, but I could see nothing. Mrs. Muggins, however, continued to watch, many times insisting that she did see one, but at length admitted that she had been mistaken. The night set in, cold and stormy, and we were glad to descend to our cavern, and very soon after to our couch.

Towards midnight the gale greatly increased in violence. The howling fury of the wind produced (as it always did) a great depression of spirits in me—a sort of melancholy restlessness that would not let me sleep, and roused in my brain none but dreary images. During a momentary pause of the storm, I thought I heard the firing of a gun. I listened with keen attention, and again it came booming to my ear. I awoke my countrywoman. We listened in great anxiety for a repetition of the sound. It came at intervals.

"They are minute guns! 'Tis a vessel

in distress," she exclaimed. We got up and looked out through the opening in the rock. The night was intensely dark; nothing was visible save the white foam of the tossing waves. We descended to the beach, and once again, in a momentary lull, we heard a gun; once, too, a lumbering sound came to our ears, and a sort of crash, and, if our imaginations did not deceive us, a human voice, exerted as in command, followed by a shout or loud wild cry, echoed in the rocks. Trembling with anxiety, we continued to watch and listen for hours, but no further repetition of these unusual sounds came to our eager ears. Nothing save the lashing of the waves and the wind, which appeared to be sinking; for the pauses it made in its giant sweep were longer, and its howling changed to a sighing whistling sound. The night was nearly passed, when at length we returned, worn and dejected, to stretch ourselves again beside our young

companion, who still calmly slept, undisturbed by the tempest or the thoughts which harassed us.

We were still sleeping, late in the morning, when Inez, who had been out to get some water, returned, breathless with haste and fear; rousing us from heavy slumber with intelligence that she had seen two men, to whom she had been so close before she perceived them, that she heard them speak distinctly, although she could not understand what they said. Fortunately she had time to hide herself, so that they had not discovered her.

Astonished at this news our hearts beat violently; but whether hope or fear predominated, I cannot tell. At any rate, it was necessary to rouse ourselves, and endeavour to obtain some farther information. For this purpose, we listened and looked out over the beach. We could neither hear nor see any human being; but some-

thing lay at the water's edge, which looked like a boat, bottom upwards. It could not be our boat, for that was moored at the back of the Island; besides, this was much larger. Unable to learn any thing here, we descended to the mossy cave, and creeping cautiously out under the trees and brushwood, again listened. A murmur of voices, as of men conversing, sounded at no great distance; and soon we heard them nearer, evidently approaching the place where we were concealed.

Trembling, we again retreated to the entrance of the cave. They passed close by, talking at the same time. I could still hear the murmur of the other more distant voices; so it was evident there were many men on the Island. I now ventured out again, to watch them. They were evidently making for the beach, and at length I got sight of them, but a very distant one. There were three men. I

had but a glimpse of them; for at the moment I ventured to look out, they went over the cliff, and slid down the rocks with a seeming ease and facility that astonished me; an operation that to us had always been a difficult, if not a dangerous one.

I now hurried back to the upper cave, being pretty certain from thence to get a nearer view of them, without any risk of being myself seen; while Mrs. Muggins and Inez remained at the entrance of the mossy cave, to watch what was passing there. I soon saw the three men cross the beach, towards the place where the boat lay.

They were all dressed in blue jackets and trousers, and had the appearance of sailors; but of what nation I could not tell. One of them, I thought, although dressed like the others, had the appearance of a gentleman. His carriage was more erect. There was a sort of stern dignity in his bearing—a

something absolute about him, like one accustomed to command. I decided at once that he was an officer; and was eager to get a nearer view of him.

They appeared to be holding a council over the boat: but soon he left the other two, and advanced towards the cliffs. I hastily descended, and standing at the opening into the beach cave, I heard him pacing up and down, and now and then an exclamation broke from his lips.

Eager to obtain more information, and imboldened by his general appearance, I now ventured through the opening into the beach cavern, and as he passed it, I caught the words, "*Jamais! non jamais!*" Gladly I recognised the language in which he spoke, and knowing, (generally speaking,) that Frenchmen were humane and honourable, I determined at once to apply to him for protection. As he again passed, I advanced far enough to render myself visible. He

stopped, apparently surprised at sight of me; then came hastily up to me, exclaiming, "A woman! The island *is* then inhabited."

"Only by three unhappy females," I said, "for whom I come to ask your protection, sir."

"How came you here?" he inquired.

"Wrecked."

"And your food?"

"Consists of a few roots we have found, some fish ——" I was going to say something else; but he interrupted me with, "You have only food enough for yourselves?"

"We have not much," I replied.

"And the island can furnish none?"

"None."

He turned from me, and I heard him mutter, "Our boat is swamped, and we have not even an axe." Again he came up to me.

"If," said he, "you have any place in which to conceal yourselves, and your pro-

visions, guard them carefully. I can give you no protection."

He was about to leave me; but the very reluctance he showed to hold any intercourse with me, I believe it was that gave me courage and confidence, and made me more anxious to explain our situation to him. To prevent his departure I laid my hand on his arm, and said earnestly, "I entreat you, sir, to allow me to speak to you. Some mutual benefit, perhaps——"

He again cut short what I was going to say, by sternly uttering, "Woman, we are starving! Death by hunger is the best you have to expect from an intercourse with us! Go, hide yourselves, while yet you may."

There was a gloomy fire in his eyes as he spoke, that made me tremble. But I felt that this was the crisis of our fate, and I persisted in my efforts to detain him. Still grasping his arm, I said, "Your situa-

tion and ours is alike desperate; but something might yet be done."

He seemed somewhat surprised with the earnest gravity of my manner, but at this moment the two men quitted the boat, and were advancing. I added, therefore, speaking hastily, "I saw you descend the cliff, climb it again, and go to the entrance of the little wood, at the western point." I was about to say a few words in addition; but the men were now so near, that we could hear what they said. Without a word, or sign of assent, he turned abruptly from me, and stepped forth to meet them; yet I felt assured he would meet me, at the place I mentioned.

Returning through the opening, I went to the entrance of the mossy cave, and watched for him. I had not waited long before I heard the crackling of the dry sticks beneath his feet, and the rustling of the displaced boughs; and was just in the

act of stepping forth, when the sound of voices met my ear. I drew back unseen. They passed close to me, and went off in another direction. I continued to watch and listen, till I became almost desperate with fear and impatience, lest he should not come; so sanguine was I in the belief that some benefit would result from a more prolonged conversation with this man, who had already won my confidence.

After a weary interval, the repetition of the same sounds revived my hopes, and once again I peeped from my covert, and then left it hastily; for the man for whom I had waited so impatiently, after pausing a moment to look round, was about to pass on. I had by no means forgotten the terrible words, "Woman, we are starving!" so lately uttered by our guest; and, before I spoke a word to him, I offered him a portion of the food we happened to have prepared. He ate a few mouthfuls eagerly, then I

heard him murmur, *Mes pauvres camarades!* when I said, "Come with me, sir; I will show you our stock of provisions. You shall yourself decide on the propriety of sharing them with your companions."

I took him to the caves, which were at once our store-room and bed-chamber. He looked round, apparently surprised and curious. But, after an examination of our stores, he shook his head with a look of disappointment, saying in a low and troubled voice, "There are eight besides myself—the only survivors of a gallant crew!"

I suggested that they might catch some of the sea birds, which were so abundant, or fish, which they might take more easily than we had done, with our nets and our boat.

"A boat!" he exclaimed; "you have a boat? What size?—where is it?"

I showed him the mast and sail, which had been housed during the stormy weather

we had had for some days past. He again shook his head, again inquiring where the boat was. I described the place where it lay, hidden by the tall reeds of the creek. He hastily departed to look at it, but soon returned with a dejected air.

"It would not carry half such a number," he said, as he seated himself on the floor of the cave, and buried his face in his hands. He sat thus, absorbed in silent rumination.

"Is it impossible to repair the boat which lies on the beach?" said Mrs. Muggins, who, with Inez, stood by, and to whom I explained what passed from time to time.

"Tell him there is pitch in the wood, and we can certainly find something to serve as oakum."

We had nothing to heat pitch in; but what we called white pitch was rather a resinous gum, of a nature sufficiently plastic to render it very serviceable without heating. All this I explained to him.

"No, no," he said after a long pause. "It can't be done! We have not an axe. We should be fighting for the small portion of food we could obtain: killing each other instead of working at the boat!" Again he relapsed into silence which lasted some time. At length he said, "No, there is no alternative! We must either leave them to die, or stay and perish with them!"

This was rather muttered to himself than addressed to me. I was almost afraid to speak; I however ventured to say, "You think, then, a certain number might use the small boat, as a means of escape from this place?"

"Yes," he replied, "three, or four perhaps; but even then it is a dreadful chance; for we have no chart, no compass, nothing to guide us; nor do I see the possibility of getting the boat ready, and clearing the Island without the knowledge of the others.

They would rush in, and we should be doomed alike to destruction. I am their commander, but I have little authority over them now; under these circumstances I should have none."

I now for the first time saw as I believed a prospect of deliverance for us, however remote, and the cheering hope gave me courage. I saw this man, probably a good and brave one, under ordinary circumstances. was now suffering from such a degree of moral depression, (the natural result of the privation and sufferings he had recently undergone,) as totally unfitted him for the present emergency. I felt assured that something might be done, if I could rouse and animate him to make the attempt. Until this moment I had forgotten to offer him some wine, of which we had still nearly two quarts. Joyfully I now availed myself of its agency, and while Mrs. Muggins filled

a small calabash with it, I pressed on him some additional food.

When he had taken them he appeared to be much revived and comforted. He looked more cheerful than I had yet seen him, and I was about to begin anew the discussion, which had dropped; when the restorants I had administered produced an effect I had not anticipated. Just as I was going to speak, I saw his eyes close, and he sank down on the floor of the cave in a deep sleep.

I allowed him to sleep undisturbed for some time, but the sun was descending in the west, and the daylight hours would soon disappear; I therefore roused him, and when he was fully awake I seated myself beside him, and said, "Now, sir, tell me your plan."

"Plan!" he replied, "I have no plan! I know not even where we are!"

"We cannot be very far from the coast of Spain," I said; "for this child (pointing to Inez,) was brought from there, in this very boat, not long since."

He listened eagerly and began to question her. These questions I translated; but the poor child could give little information, such as he needed, terrified and half senseless as she had been during the voyage. After some farther reflection, he said, "The only possible chance of ultimate escape appears to be for a certain number of persons to be sent off in the boat. Should they be fortunate enough to reach a Spanish port, common humanity will induce those who have the power to despatch a vessel to rescue the others who remain here —they who may still be living when it reaches this desert place."

I was afraid he was about to relapse into a desponding mood, and I said, "Take courage, sir, things are not altogether hope-

less. We have, as you know, provisions. We will share them with you. Take the boat. We will go with you or wait your return, as you shall decide."

While I was yet speaking, he put his hand on my mouth to ensure my silence. The voices of men, who appeared to be rapidly approaching, sounded in our ears. We remained quiet and listening. Scarcely had they passed when the Captain started up, exclaiming, "They *may* find the boat! If they get hold of that——" before he had finished the phrase he was gone.

Anxiously we watched and listened for his return. The sun was setting, and still he came not. At length, when it was getting dark, he hastily entered the cave. There was just light enough left to show me that he looked harassed and worn. As he threw himself for a moment on the ground and wiped his face, which was covered with perspiration, I heard him say, "This is the

bitterest drop my cup has yet contained. I have bound my own brave fellows, and left them to die of hunger perhaps."

This was rather uttered in soliloquy than addressed to me; but he then rose and said, "I have decided that the only chance to save any of us is for a few to depart at once. I will lead this forlorn hope. In half an hour there will be water enough to set the boat afloat, when I shall depart. May Heaven protect you all till I return! as surely I will do, should my life be spared."

He seemed much shaken; after a pause he resumed somewhat more cheerfully, "Your situation, who remain in this desert place, and ours who are about to leave it, under such circumstances, are alike cheerless; but we are all in the hands of God. Let us not forget this. I have selected such of the men to take with me as I can least trust,—the more turbulent spirits. I have left you as a protector my faithful

Jacques. As far as one man can defend you against many, he will do it. He is honest: you may trust him implicitly. He is the only one to whom I have confided the secret of your existence here. Now you must give me a portion of your food."

What had we to give as a provision for a voyage? Alas! no more than a few salted eggs and smoked fish. I would fain have had him take the wine, but he would not.

"No," he said; "*our* probation will be short, yours may be long. We shall, in a few days, either reach a port or ——"

His voice faltered, he left the phrase unfinished; and, without another word, went off with the mast and sail.

It was not quite dark, so that, when we crept from our hiding-place, (as we now did, knowing that a number of the men were busy about the boat, and the others bound and guarded in another part of the

Island,) we could hear the murmur of their voices, and see indistinctly their movements. The night was calm and still. The reeds rustled as the boat moved through them. When the last faint sound of the dipping oars died in the distance, my spirits gave way. I sat down and cried with grief and disappointment; for I had secretly cherished a hope that we should have gone with him.

That hope had disappeared, and he was gone, never to return perhaps.

The deep stillness that succeeded his departure weighed heavily on me. It seemed to me like the silence of the grave. It oppressed my heart with a feeling of desolate bereavement; and I wept for the loss of this man whom I had known only a few hours—whose name I did *not* know—as if he had been an old friend. Hours passed under such circumstances produce the effects of years. He had won my con-

fidence. I thought, too, he resembled my father; and the idea conjured up a long train of mournful images, ere I sank to sleep on my miserable couch, which seemed to me more damp and comfortless than I had ever found it.

The bright beams of morning dispersed these gloomy thoughts. Hope woke again to cheer our desert dwelling. The prisoners had been released from their bonds; for, during the course of the day, we caught occasionally the sound of their footsteps and their voices. We did not venture forth, and it was not till the evening that the preconcerted signal, a low whistle, announced the approach of a visiter; and the "faithful Jacques," who had been deputed governor and guardian by Captain Muron, (for this I now learned was his name,) made his appearance in the form of a plain, quiet-looking man, about thirty years old, speaking French with so strong a Swiss accent

as at first to render his language almost unintelligible to me.

But he had, above all, an air of honest simplicity about him, that, had he not been so recommended by a master he had served for many years, would yet have won our confidence; greatly did his proximity add to our comfort and security. In a situation such as ours any distinction of social rank would have been ridiculous; indeed Jacques, having been regularly invested with the government of the Island, was, of course, the most important person among us; so that we were at once on the same easy terms with the man we had so lately held with the master. Jacques was invited to seat himself, and offered a part of the food we had prepared for ourselves, by toasting over a lamp we had made with a small calabash, and some oil from the medicine chest; not daring to kindle or keep up a fire, lest the smoke should betray us. We

also offered him wine, but he would take nothing.

He said the men had knocked down five or six sea-birds the day before, which they had roasted, and of which he had received a portion. It was at the end of this feast, at a given signal, that those who were in the confidence of the Captain had suddenly seized and bound their comrades who were to remain; and who were again liberated as soon as the others had left the land, when the motives for this strange assault was explained to them.

The first question we put to our new friend was on the probability of Captain Muron being enabled to reach a port, and the time that must elapse before he did so. Jacques shook his head with a sorrowful countenance, as he replied, "God only knows whether he will ever find a port! It makes my heart ache to think about him; wanting every thing—not even a drop of

water, except the puddle in the bottom of the boat, which was left on purpose. My brave Captain — my kind master!" he added, his voice choked with grief.

"He used to be a strong, healthy man; for whom nothing was too hot, or too heavy, if it crossed his course; but since this shipwreck and starvation — since our good ship Le Dauphin went to pieces on the rocks, and he heard the desperate cries from the drowning men for help which he could not give—he has been an altered man. He ought to have taken me with him; and I— I would rather have shared his fate, whatever it may be. But he planted me here to take care of you and the men he left. He told me your story, and said, in taking away your boat, he had taken your means of subsistence. That *I* must supply his place. I will do my best to obey him, whether I ever see him again or not!" he concluded, wiping the tears from his eyes.

Soon after, Jacques took his leave, with a promise to return the next morning when he was to take the nets, and if it should be found possible to patch up the large boat a little, they were to try and catch some fish. Accordingly, the next day, he set the men to work on the boat; telling them he had found some queer tackle, which appeared to have been intended for a fishing net, and which he would bring back by the time the boat was ready.

It was not, however, till the day was quite spent that they succeeded in righting it, and putting it in a condition to set off on its short fishing trip. Consequently we remained close prisoners; for the only spring of fresh water on the Island, was the tiny stream, which rose close to our back cave: so that we were in constant danger of discovery, from the frequent visits of the men who came to drink; hav-

ing no vessels in which to carry it away with them.

The next day our good friend came to tell us, the four men were all gone off in the boat, in search of fish. This was good news to us, to whom it restored the liberty of ranging about at will once again; a pleasure we had not dared to indulge in since their advent to the Island.

Our guardian keeping on the watch to apprise us of their return, we roved about, visited our old haunts, and sought everywhere for a companion we had been forced to abandon. This was a sea-gull which, having been wounded, we had fed and petted till it had become quite tame. It was, however, no where to be found, and I had little doubt that our poor pet had helped to furnish a dinner for the men.

Inez, fortunately, never suspected the fate of her favourite. We took this opportunity to show our friend the whole of

our premises, with the back and front doors, and windows; and we had just all seated ourselves to the frugal meal, to which we had invited him, when our ears were suddenly saluted with shouts and whoops, that drove us quickly to our retreat, and sent Jacques off at speed to ascertain its cause: of this we remained in ignorance for some hours.

It was quite dark before we heard the welcome signal, which announced the expected visit. The tidings he brought were, that the men had taken no fish. The boat had been found so water-logged and unserviceable, that they had been compelled to make for the shore as quickly as possible, and land at the nearest point they could reach. This happened to be near the wood. In crossing this they started a monkey, in pursuit of which they set off; and after a short but sharp chase succeeded in killing it. The afternoon had been

employed in skinning, roasting, and eating it.

It was during the monkey hunt, that the shouts and whooping, which had alarmed us, burst forth. He had left them occupied in the construction of a sort of ladder, which they had undertaken to make with their knives, (for they had three knives among them) from materials they found in the wood, for the purpose of taking the birds, at night, from the holes in the cliffs. The leaky, useless boat, was now mentioned and lamented. There must certainly be a good many fish near the coast; for the sea-birds were numerous, and they had no other food. As I constantly translated the conversation between me and Jacques to my companions, Mrs. Muggins burst forth with the exclamation of, "Ah, they are clumsy fellows, no better than 'land-lubbers,' these Frenchmen! English sailors would have found ways and means to make

that boat sea-worthy. I would be bound to do it myself, if I could have a little help, with some of the white pitch, and nice soft cotton grass, to work with in calking."

Jacques was by birth a Swiss, but his master and comrades were Frenchmen; I therefore thought it right to modify the strength of her expressions. I did not translate, (in truth, I could not if I would) "land-lubbers" in making him acquainted with her opinion of the want of skill, displayed in their attempts to repair the boat.

"Three of them," he said, "*are* stupid fellows, but the other is not. Le Martineau is a good seaman, and a quick-witted fellow; but this is the business of a carpenter. To-morrow I will see what can be done."

The following morning I awoke very early, it was scarcely daylight, when I found

Mrs. Muggins had disappeared from my side; she again made her appearance in a short time. She had run the risk of meeting some of the men, who were ranging about at all hours, for the purpose of inspecting the boat.

"It is in a bad condition," she said; "some of the timbers have started, and the seams are gaping; but if they would only set about it with a good deal of patience, and a hearty good will, it might soon be set right again. They should tap some of the pitch trees in the wood. They would get plenty of stuff that wants no heating, and dries quick." She finished by muttering to herself something of which I only caught the words, "lubberly and mouse-hearted."

As soon as Jacques came, I made my report, for I had great faith in her judgment on this subject; and I knew, as she declared, that this resinous gum really was a most valuable substance, from a plastic quality,

and its property of quickly drying into a firm and durable cement.

I suppose they did set about it with a "hearty good will, and a good deal of patience," for in two days afterwards, the boat was reported to be in excellent trim, quite fit for service. The best proof of which was that they went out, and returned with a good lot of fish, spite of the badness of the nets. These in their turn underwent the process of repair and improvement, which rendered them greatly more efficient. From this time we often enjoyed the luxury again of a broiled fish for dinner or supper, furnished by our friend, from the portion allotted to himself. His good-humoured face seemed to expand with satisfaction on these occasions, or whenever he was able to render a service to his mistresses, as he called us.

The gossiping visits he made to our cave, were evidently a pleasant recreation to him.

A very good understanding appeared to exist between him and Mrs. Muggins. I was often amused to hear, or rather to see, the conversations carried on by them; for it was principally by signs that this was done. They were congenial spirits, and needed only a word or two of explanation, now and then, to comprehend each other perfectly. To relieve us as much as possible from the irksome confinement to our half-lighted caverns, to which we had been condemned since the arrival of these men, our friend used to inform us by a signal, when the men were off on a fishing trip. This was by a peculiar whistle. Jacques Bontemps was a famous whistler. It was a lively Swiss air, popular on his native mountains, that always announced the departure of the boat, and our freedom to rove at will about the island, as we had been accustomed to do.

Another air told their return, and warned

us to seek our retreat. We went on this way; pretty comfortable, considering the very strange circumstances in which fate had placed us. Nearly a fortnight had elapsed since the departure of Captain Muron, when all four of the men were out with the boat, and we at liberty and rejoicing thereat; for the weather had continued fine since the last storm. Suddenly our holiday was cut short, by their unexpected return; and Jacques came, not with his usual slow step, and bland physiognomy, but with a grave face, and hurried manner, to tell us a disaster which had occurred to the fishers. One of them accidentally fell over board, and being unable to swim, must have been drowned, but for the efforts of another, who leapt into the sea, and caught him as he was sinking. The drowning man seized him by the throat with such a strangling grasp, as almost to ensure the destruction of both. In short, they had

been saved with the greatest difficulty, and brought ashore by their messmates, exhausted and nearly lifeless; and Jacques wanted some wine for his half-drowned comrades.

I remembered that in the medicine chest there was some spirit of wine, which, mixed with water, was a very good substitute for brandy, and much more likely to benefit them than wine. I furnished him, therefore, with a calabash and a little water, and telling where to find the bottle, he went off. This stimulating draught poured down their throats, soon restored them to sense and motion, and things went on again in their ordinary course. No ill resulted from this accident to the men; but it produced other consequences, on which we had not reckoned.

Two days after this occurrence, we were quietly occupied in our mossy cavern with some ordinary business, when suddenly we heard a rustling of the branches

of the trees and brushwood, which concealed the entrance; and looked up in expectation of seeing our friend the "Governor," as we called him. But, instead of his calm and good-natured face, an ugly, scarred, and weather-beaten visage with a wild, half frightened, half curious expression, appeared between the divided boughs; and, after gazing at us a moment, again vanished.

Anxiously we waited, after this startling event, for the arrival of our guardian. But the whole day passed, and we saw nothing of him. Our existence, our retreat, was discovered; we were no longer safe. The ugly figure might, doubtless would, return alone, or perhaps with the whole number. Our situation was now perilous, and wretched indeed. We crept to the upper cave; but, far too anxious and uneasy to rest, we sat listening, and trembling at every sound, till past midnight; when we were cheered with the faint echo of the

signal, which announced his approach. So faint, so low indeed was the whistle, that to ears unsharpened by fear and expectation, it would have been unheard.

How doubly welcome, this time, came the ever welcome sound, and we crept back again to the mossy cave to meet him; for the men, for some time past, had taken up their lodging in the beach cave; which, being just below the one in which we slept, and in which we had taken refuge, would by no means do to carry on a conference in, as our voices would certainly have been heard. He was aware of the discovery; for Paul Levisage had given such a strange and ridiculous account of the visit he had made us, as would, under any other circumstances, have caused a hearty laugh.

It appeared their suspicions had been excited by the calabash, and its contents. Paul declared it was brandy which had

been put down his throat; and, after much discussion, they came to the unanimous decision, that either Monsieur Jacques Bontemps had somewhere a secret store, or else had dealings with the devil. It was in vain he protested he had picked up the calabash, and taken the liquor from the chest: they declared they had themselves overhauled every thing the box contained, and there was nothing like brandy in it. From this time, it seems, he had been followed and watched. The result was the discovery of our retreat. The account he, Paul Levisage, gave was, that, having marked the spot where Jacques had disappeared, he had gone to examine it, and had suddenly popped his head into a witches' cave; "sea witches," he said. He had seen three or four of them. "They were rolling about among the sea-weeds, and their place was all hung round with figures of fishes."

Jacques had overheard this narrative,

which the man concluded with, "I wish to God he had not put that stuff down my throat; I have never been the same man since."

I was rather rejoiced to hear the turn things had taken. Surely it could not be difficult to rule these ignorant and superstitious men. If they believed us to be witches they would be afraid of us, and we should be able to govern them through their fears. Our *incognita* was now destroyed, and with it the irksome restraint to which we had been subjected. We might now go forth, if we thought proper so to do, and make a fire when we had need of one. On the whole, I was well content with the state of affairs: for I by no means despaired of being able to control these turbulent spirits, whom we had hitherto so much feared.

"They have given us the character of witches," I said; "see if we do not play them well."

Jacques did not take quite so cheerful a view of our prospects in this respect. He said there was one of the four who had no faith in witches, and did not share the fears of the others. He was, besides, of a character so daring that nothing would stop him in a course he had once decided on. I inquired if he was a man of any education. Jacques said, No: he had been no better taught than the others, but that he was very superior to them in native intellect. It was late in the night before we separated. We lay down on our weedy couch, and Jacques threw himself on the floor of the lower cave till morning, when he went again to learn what the others were doing.

He came back about noon, and told us they seemed shy of him; but nevertheless he had ascertained that Le Martineau (the one who had no faith in witches,) had been trying to persuade the others to make a visit to the witches' cave; where he swore

Jacques Bontemps had a store secreted—grog and biscuit enough to victual a man of war. He had not, however, succeeded in dispelling their fears. But our friend declared, from his knowledge of Le Martineau, that he felt assured he would come alone if the others should still refuse to accompany him; so that we ought to be prepared for such a visit. He promised to watch their movements, and give us notice of what they were about.

Moreover, we arranged a sort of telegraphic mode of communication. The display of Jacques' red pocket handkerchief was to indicate the approach of the enemy, &c. One or other of us were to be always on guard, on the look-out. He himself would keep watch and give us all the protection he could, should they come, as he feared they would. In anticipation of this attack, we next had to consider what other means of defence we had at our command.

Should Le Martineau come alone, and Jacques at hand, we were surely more than a match for him; besides, the man was said to be intelligent, and might be reasoned with. Indeed I suggested the plan of sending for him, and by explaining to him our situation, try to win him to our party, as a friend and ally.

This plan was one that ought to have been tried; but Jacques shook his head, without explaining his reasons for dissenting, and it was abandoned If Le Martineau could not be frightened, the others might—frightened or physicked. Again I turned my thoughts to the contents of the medicine chest; that agent which had so many times been of service to us, and which we had foolishly despised because it contained only physic when we wanted nothing but food. There was phosphorus and oil: I could make a mixture, a little of which on the walls of the half-lighted cave

would produce a most terrific appearance, —a blazing cavern, fit for a witches' home. None of these ignorant men would venture to face these seeming flames. But Le Martineau, "He would not fear the devil himself," was Jacques' description of him.

Suddenly the electric machine came to my recollection. I knew it had escaped the notice of the Moors. The men had quitted the beach cave, where it still remained, and were gone to collect wood for their fire and other uses. Without losing a minute I passed through the opening, and with the help of my companions carried all the necessary machinery back with me. On examination, I found it had suffered a good deal of injury, yet not so much as to render it useless; I soon set it right. I had often aided my father in his experiments: I felt assured I could so arrange it as to give any one who should attempt to enter the cave, a reception they would not like. I went to

work *con amore*, and not knowing but that I might have an assault to repel within an hour, I prepared the masked battery to which we looked for defence.

The day, however, passed over in peace; we were no way disturbed. The next morning the men all went off early on a fishing expedition; so that we began to hope we should not be molested. Rejoicing in our freedom, my two companions went off in search of the resinous wood, which blazed up so readily; and I was busy with some domestic arrangement in the upper chamber. Accidentally I went to the slit in the rock we called the window, and looked out, when lo! extended on the beach lay the red handkerchief—the warning signal, the indication of danger. I could scarcely believe my eyes. The men were all gone; I had seen them myself row away from the shore, not an hour since. But there lay the red flag extended with *four* stones at the corners. They

were, therefore, all four come back. They were all four coming to our place of retreat, and I was alone: to remove any doubt I might have retained, the sharp shrill notes of the warning whistle now sounded in my ears again and again, sharper and shriller at each repetition.

My heart beat violently: I felt the strongest impulse to run away, but a moment's reflection taught me this would be a ruinous piece of folly, since we could not ultimately escape them. "No," I said to myself, "it is now or never. If we cannot intimidate them, they will become our masters, and then——"

I flew to the back cave, and having fortunately put every thing ready, it required but a very short time to finish the arrangement.

This was scarcely done when some one put aside the boughs, attempted to enter, and was rudely repulsed. It was our poor

friend the governor, who had rushed to our assistance. Another, and a strange face appeared; a third was seen beside it. Both met with a rude shock and staggered back: but in one of the assailants, it seems, we had no common man to deal with; for in the next minute he renewed the attack with undaunted resolution, upset the masked battery and rushed into the cave, with Jacques beside him, who, before the other was aware of his proximity, had tripped up his heels and laid him sprawling on the earth. Not a minute elapsed ere he was up again, and our poor Jacques, in his turn, was stretched at his length on the floor of the cave. I was terribly frightened, but with a sort of desperation, I seized the intruder by one of his legs, and gave it such a pull as sent him forward on his face.

Our party had now again the advantage: Jacques had thrown himself on the enemy, and was shouting for something to bind him

with. This something was soon furnished among us, for at this moment, Mrs. Muggins and Inez, recalled by the shrill and well-known sounds that told of danger, rushed breathless in, to aid in binding the captive; which, however, was not effected without great difficulty: more than once he broke his bonds, when we thought him quite secure. In the end we made his capture complete, and Jacques had time to wipe the heavy drops of perspiration from his face. As to me I was as cold as ice, and trembled like a leaf.

Our next consideration was how to dispose of our prisoner. It was decided for the present to leave him where he was. The disappearance of their bold leader in the witches' cave, would add without doubt to the superstitious fears of the other men; who, it seems, had with great difficulty been prevailed on to approach the place; and who, on seeing Le Martineau repulsed and

driven back by an invisible hand, had instantly fled in dismay. Our captive was, therefore, left to ruminate on the satisfaction he had obtained by a forcible entrance into our domains; and at night the governor stretched himself beside him as a guard, while we retired to our upper chamber as usual.

The next day, considering that it would not be advisable, for many reasons, to keep him long in bondage, I determined to make an attempt to secure him as an ally. He was a host in himself. If we could get him to join our party, we should be more than a match for all the others, and might fearlessly set them at defiance.

I saw, as we passed him occasionally during the morning, that he eyed us with a sort of sullen curiosity. I now, for the first time, had leisure enough to take a good look at him. While the contest lasted, I was far too agitated to see any thing dis-

tinctly; and when he was bound, and extended on the ground, he pretended to be asleep—the better to mark all that took place, no doubt; for I saw clearly, as I in my turn watched him, in the absence of his male guard, that he was not asleep. On examining his countenance, I was glad to see that it bore a bold and frank expression, which gave me courage and confidence for the attack I was about to make on him.

He was a well-formed, good-looking man, apparently of about five or six-and-twenty years of age. I went up to him and said, "You are a Frenchman, Monsieur Le Martineau." He made me no answer. "You are a Frenchman," I repeated. "Is it the practice of your countrymen to persecute, to make war against women?"

"No, par ——," he exclaimed, with a slight flush on his face, as if indignant at such an accusation.

I went on, "You have been making war

against us. We are women, not witches, as you well know. You have been wounded, (his hand had been badly cut, I believe, by a sharp flint projecting at the entrance of the cave,) you have been wounded, and are suffering pain in consequence of your attempt to force your way into our presence against our will. But there is something in your appearance that gives me a good opinion of you, notwithstanding this outbreak. If you will pledge your word not to molest us again, you shall be set at liberty; and I will do my best to cure your wounded hand. Will you promise?" He had relapsed into his sulky mood, and remained silent.

After a short pause he said, looking at Jacques (who stood by during this dialogue,) with an air of defiance, "Let the Swiss do what he will. Let him do his worst. I will promise nothing." I was hardly prepared for such a turn as this; I had ex-

pected that he would have gladly welcomed freedom on these easy terms. Reflecting on the absolute necessity of giving him liberty, I thought it best to make a virtue of this necessity, and I said, "You will not promise not to molest us; nevertheless you look like an honest man. You shall have your liberty, that we may find in you another friend and protector, as I am confident we shall. Release him, Monsieur Bontemps."

Jacques hesitated; but I repeated, "Release him! I am confident we shall find a friend in Monsieur le Martineau!" The man's face brightened; he looked pleased. I could see he was flattered by the confidence I placed in him. It was, in fact, the surest way to win a bold frank spirit like his.

No sooner was he released from his bonds, than he said, "Ah, madam, you know better how to manage me than that clumsy Swiss. Now I am free, I *will*

promise not to molest you; I will promise to protect and serve you."

I saw by the angry glance directed towards him, that he had not yet forgiven our friend the hard blows he had dealt him in the struggle. I was anxious to reconcile them to each other for many reasons, and I said, "You are not just, Le Martineau. He (pointing to Jacques) wished to protect us; what he did was done in our defence. Had you been in his place, you would have done as he did!"

He appeared to be somewhat mollified by what I said, and went away with a cheerful face. From that time our late captive proved a faithful ally. He worked for, and waited on us; caught fish, cooked them, and brought them to us nicely wrapped in the leaves of the plants which grew near the rocks; sought wood and water when we needed any; in short, we had now two guardians instead of one.

Our comfort was greatly augmented by this transaction, and greatly did we rejoice in the quiet conclusion of such a stormy beginning; but we were surprised to see that our first friend did not seem to share our satisfaction. There was a graver, an almost discontented expression on his face. I knew he was unhappy about his master the captain; but, independent of this, it was easy to see he did not at all rejoice at the new alliance we had formed. I did not then know what was afterwards revealed, that the poor man had unfortunately conceived a very affectionate friendship for my countrywoman, Mrs. Muggins. Not aware that she was already married, he had made up his mind to seek her as a wife, should fate release us from the island, and he did not like the close attendance of the good-looking Le Martineau. This was the source of the discontent which clouded his good-natured face.

About this time the weather became so stormy, that no fish could be caught, for they dared not venture out in search of them; and they were forced to content themselves with the few sea-birds they took at night from the rocks. They had another monkey chase, but it was an unsuccessful one; so that they watched anxiously for a calm.

During these idle days, they had leisure to discuss the circumstances of their present position and future prospects. A month had elapsed since they came to the Island, and no hopes could now be rationally entertained of any help. Had Captain Muron reached the Spanish coast, there had been ample time for his return, or for sending out a boat for our rescue. For a long time we had cheered ourselves with hope: but now it was the opinion of all that we should never hear of him again. Some of them were inclined to accuse him of treachery; of having secured his own safety, and

voluntarily abandoned us to our fate. But this opinion Jacques Bontemps, his faithful servant, who best knew him, always sternly denied. "If it had pleased the Almighty to have spared the life of Captain Muron, he would have come back to us. But he is in a better world, where there is no shipwrecks and starving." This was the constant reply he made to these suspicions.

There was indeed no hope of his return, no hope of rescue for us, and what a gloomy prospect did the future present! We were condemned to pass the winter in this desert place. A sort of council was held once or twice during these stormy days. Every body agreed on the necessity of providing for the winter. But what provision *could* be made, where a scanty supply for the present and most pressing wants, was all that their utmost exertions obtained?

After nearly a week of this forced inactivity the stormy winds sank; the weather

again became calm, and these councils were suspended, by the recommencement of the fishing expeditions. The sea was still heaving somewhat tumultuously, from the swell of the recent storm, when the boat left the shore; and we watched it with anxious eyes, as it receded from our view; and turned away with the sad certainty, that henceforth, from the advancing season, these voyages, short as they were, would be very dangerous, from the treacherous nature of the coast, and the sudden hurricanes to which it was subject. That our fears were not groundless was soon proved.

Jacques Bontemps with the three others were in the boat, leaving only Le Martineau with us on shore. Towards the afternoon we were looking out in expectation of their return; but saw nothing of them. The tide stood at flood, and began to recede. We then ceased to expect them; knowing they must now wait for another tide, to

bring them back to the Island. This would not serve till the middle of the night; so they would probably not return till the next day. This was not an unusual occurrence, and gave us no additional anxiety. The days were now much shorter, and having no light but that furnished by a fire, or slips of the resinous wood, which burnt out very quick, and were more troublesome than useful, we retired early to our weedy couch, and were asleep, when the voice of Le Martineau roused us. He begged us to get up. Something was going wrong.

As soon as we joined him he said he had been out to look for the rising of the moon, and to watch the sailing of the clouds, in order to form an opinion on the weather we might expect during the next few days to come; when his attention had been suddenly roused by a distant shout. He then remembered to have heard it once before, towards the evening, but had heard

it unheeded. Now, however, in the silence of the noisy sea-birds, and the deep stillness of night, faint as it was, he recognised it as the voice of his absent comrades.

He was greatly agitated. "Something bad," he said, "must have happened, or was about to befall them, or they would not be shouting there. Knowing too, as they must know, that we can give them no help, what is the use of worrying us with their cries. But come along with me and listen; perhaps I may be wrong."

We followed him to the rocky peak, at the highest part of the Island. The night was calm and still. The moon was rising, and threw her placid light around, giving a silvery gleam to the far stretching plain of mud, with here and there a white rock, which the retreating tide had uncovered. We had not stood long in this position, when the sound Le Martineau had heard was repeated. It came faintly to our

ears: but we were all of the same opinion, that it was raised by the voices of men. These men were surely those who had gone out to fish. Some disaster must have occurred—some accident to the boat—some one of those pointed rocks might have knocked a hole in her bottom.

If it were so, their position was perilous indeed. They were probably aground in the mud; from which they could only be released by the flowing of the next tide; which, if the boat was injured, would swamp it, and drown them: for of all these men, though sailors and accustomed to a sea life, only one of them (Paul Levisage) could swim. Le Martineau now sent forth a "Hilloa-oho," that nearly deafened us who stood beside him. It evidently reached those for whom it was intended; for it was instantly answered by the same sounds, as we had before heard, coming back like an echo.

"Perhaps it may comfort them, poor souls, to know we are awake to their shouts, though that is all we can do for them," he said, as he repeated his hail. The little wind there was had hitherto blown from the land; which was, no doubt, the reason why their united voices were so faintly heard. It shifted a short time after, and we distinctly caught several words uttered by them; by which we learned we had guessed rightly. They were precisely in the terrible predicament we imagined. No idea of the possibility of aiding them suggested itself to either me or Le Martineau. But Mrs. Muggins said, "There is no other way of saving their lives, than by going out to them, and haling the boat to land. We must look for the splatches and set off at once; there is no time to lose."

I told Le Martineau what she said. He semed astonished. He had never seen

any "splatches," and the possibility of traversing that muddy plain, seemed to him doubtful. But a *woman* volunteered in the service of attempting to rescue his countrymen and comrades from death; and surely, Le Martineau was not the man to shrink from such a challenge.

We went back at once in search of the mud clogs, which had been thrown by and forgotten; not having been used for a long time past. It was some time before they could be found, and when at length they were discovered, one pair was found dismantled—destitute of the thongs, which bound them to the feet, and which it was necessary to supply afresh.

All this occasioned delay; much precious time was lost, and the night was far advanced ere they set off, hand in hand, steadying and supporting each other on this strange expedition, while I stood

shivering with fear and anxiety on the shore.

Inez, whom we had left sleeping when roused by Le Martineau, had waked, and finding both her companions absent, had crept down to see what had become of us; and now went with me to the end of the marsh, where the solid ground gave place to the treacherous soil, which would not bear our footsteps. Here then we separated. Mrs. Muggins, before she stepped off the firm ground, turned to me, shook my hand, kissed me, and whispered, "May God bless you, my dear friend; think of me sometimes if I should never come back, for it is likely this may turn out a queer business. But I don't want Le Martineau to know this. He is a brave fellow, but this is new work to him, and I must keep him up to it. I know by the restlessness of the sea-birds that the tide has turned; we must go as fast as we can."

I could have willingly sat down on the ground and had a good hearty fit of crying; but fearing to frighten my poor little friend, the only companion now left me, I swallowed my tears, and we stood listening in silence. For some time we heard nothing but the sucking sound of the mud clogs, as they were drawn up at each step, and a few words from those who wore them. As these died away, came occasionally a cheer from Le Martineau, and the responding shout from those to whose assistance he was hastening. After a long interval, we could distinctly hear the plashing of oars in the water, (the gentle tide breeze blowing now right in our teeth,) with the murmur of distant voices.

They could not, I thought, be more than half a mile from us. But half a mile was a long way to go over a slippery plain of mud, and this at night too. From the sound of the oars, I knew the waves were

already circling round the boat. Would help arrive in time? Would it reach them at all? An accident to one of the clogs, the giving way of the bands which bound them to the feet, and the wearer must sink and be suffocated! How my heart sank with dismay as all this passed through my mind. What a long and tedious night did this appear, while weary with standing so long. My poor little Inez, who would not leave me, and I, seated ourselves on the moist ground of the marsh, waiting and watching with intense anxiety to catch some indication of what was going on.

After a long interval of silence, we heard again the sound of oars; not the paddling, plashing in shallow water, but the regular measured stroke. They were fairly afloat: the condition of the boat could not be very bad. But this cheering sound ceased. A sharp shrill cry, loud exclamations and a murmur of many voices succeeded. Another

interval of silence followed, and then came again the rumbling of the oars in the row-locks. The moon had gone down, but it was a clear night, not very dark, and it was nearly gone. Soon after, the first faint beams of day dawned. The sea-birds were out on *their* fishing business, and their cries rendered all other sounds indistinct and uncertain in their indications, except the ripple of the tide, washing rapidly up all round; and there was soon light enough to see that only one broad patch of mud, somewhat more elevated than the rest, remained uncovered. Then, in the faint light of the breaking day, I saw some dark object at the farther edge of this spot of land. It must be the boat! I started up to get a better view, forgetting little Inez, who had fallen asleep with her head in my lap. It was the boat! The increasing light allowed me to see it. Two men were towing it to land. Where was my poor countrywoman?

Impatiently I waited, almost with suspended breath, while the heavy water-logged boat was slowly, and with great difficulty, drawn across this muddy elevation, aided a little by the shallow waves, alternately advancing and receding. Then they floundered into deeper water and tried the oars again; but the weighty mass they sought to move was insensible to this slight impulse. As they approached the Island their difficulties seemed to augment. The splatches, which were so useful where there was no water, were a dangerous nuisance where there was, having a tendency to buoy up the feet and upset the wearer. However, they did scramble to land; and I had the satisfaction of seeing the brave woman once again safe, but terribly exhausted, who had volunteered to lead this forlorn hope. As she afterwards told me, she had had great difficulty to keep Le Martineau on his legs.

"He did not take to mud-skaiting," she

said, "so readily as you did; and when I remembered (which I did not do till we were fairly launched) that I could not understand his language, nor he mine, my heart seemed to die within me. However, I was off, and I would not turn back. You offered me your shawl, and I took it. You must forgive me, because I thought it might help to make a plug for the boat, if there should be a hole in her bottom. It was of great use to us. I don't think we should have come back alive if it had not been for that, and one of my petticoats, that we stuffed in with it. When we got to them, poor souls! weren't they glad to see us?

"But Paul Levisage and Jacques did us a deal of mischief. Whenever they saw a little water they *would* leap out of the boat to tow instead of me; and then in a minute they were sinking and like to be suffocated, if they had not been hauled in again."

It was not till the next day that I had this account, with many other particulars of the expedition; for, as I said, she was quite exhausted. When they reached the land, Jacques Bontemps took her out of the boat, and carried her to our chamber, where I removed her wet clothes, and, after wrapping her in the great cloak, gave her some wine, and had the pleasure of seeing both her and Inez in a sound sleep beside me; for I, too, was worn and weary, wanting rest for my limbs, and repose for my spirit. As soon as I had done what I could for the drenched seamen, I also went to sleep.

We did not meet them again till late the next day, when I heard, with satisfaction, that this eventful and disastrous voyage had been a most productive one. It was, in fact, the large lot of fish they fell in with, which had endangered their lives, and nearly destroyed the boat, by inducing them rashly to venture where, had they not been hot in

pursuit of their prey, they would have known they ought not to go. This large booty fortunately exempted them for some time from the labour of seeking food, and gave them leisure to repair the boat, a work of time and patience, having no tools but their three knives to work with.

It was while they were occupied with this tedious and laborious task, that the discussion as to our ultimate destiny again arose. Should we brave the coming winter, with the hardships and suffering we must anticipate, on this barren place? or should we risk a quicker termination to our sorrows, by putting the boat in the best condition they could, and embarking in search of the mainland.

It was at length decided that two days should be given to deliberation and mature consideration, when each was to give his opinion. What the majority resolved on was to be done. The two days elapsed:

the decision was made. We were to leave the Island and "finish the business one way or the other," as they expressed themselves. It was moreover settled, that as we were to go, the sooner we embarked the better would be our chance, as the days were shortening fast. After some farther conversation on the subject, that day fortnight was fixed for our departure, as allowing a sufficient time for completing the repairs; and also on account of the moon, whose light would cheer us on our trackless way.

The possibility of making a mast and sail was suggested by one of the men; but the more experienced scouted the idea as ridiculous, with such materials only as we possessed, and contented themselves with cutting out another pair of oars, and fitting it up as a four-oared barge. To work they went steadily and perseveringly; but with unusual gravity and silence.

Even Mrs. Muggins talked but half as much as she generally did.

About a week the weather continued dry and fine, when it was broken by two wet and stormy days, which greatly inconvenienced the workmen, and impeded the repairs; compelling them, as they expressed it, "to work double tides" as soon as it settled again. On the evening preceding our departure, every thing was ready. The men retired to their bivouac, and we to our cotton grass couch, for the last time.

My companions went to sleep, as if the coming morning had been appointed for setting out on an ordinary journey. Mrs. Muggins had not irritable nerves, and Inez was too young to appreciate the difficulties and dangers that awaited us. I envied, but I could not imitate them. I lay wakeful and restless, ruminating on the strange position in which fate had placed me — taking a mental leave of those dear friends

and relations, whom I believed I should see no more: for my mind was fully prepossessed with the idea that we could not escape from death.

"They will not grieve for me," I said to myself, "for they have long believed me dead." This thought consoled me; for certainly the bitterest pain we endure is in knowing those we love are suffering.

Thus I passed the night, till, weary of my gloomy forebodings and melancholy thoughts, I got up and went into the open air. The moon had set. The night was nearly spent: the air was calm, and all was still except the tide, which was to bear us away, washing up, advancing fast on every side. The day began to break. The voices of the men sounded on the air, their footsteps on the beach. I roused my companions, and we descended together. We entered the boat amid a solemn silence — unbroken, except by the few necessary

words, and they were uttered by the men in a low and subdued tone.

The boat was pushed off. We left the barren island, of which we soon lost sight, and were traversing the ocean desert, with its world of waters, in our crazy bark; but "*half* a plank between us and eternity."

It appeared to me that we avoided looking in each others' faces, lest we should see reflected there the expression of our own gloomy thoughts; for all knew, although no one said so, that with all that had and could be done, the boat was any thing but sea-worthy. About noon we took some food and a little wine. Heaven knows we had need enough of it! It cheered and comforted us. We went gliding on till the shades of night were closing over us. It became quite dark, and we relapsed into despondency. The weather was calm and clear: the moon arose to light our silent way. We ate our supper, and had a little

more wine; which again restored our flagging spirits.

The men relieving each other at the oars, Mrs. Muggins taking her turn with them, they began to talk of latitudes and longitudes, and settling the course in which they were steering. But I believe none of them knew any thing about it, and that we were going at hazard to some point of the compass. As for me, a heavy drowsiness came on me, and I sank to the bottom of the boat in a sound sleep, with Inez beside me. I did not wake till the morning, when I found my countrywoman near me, and asleep. Some one had covered us all three with the cloak.

The sun had risen, its beams were warm and pleasant, a light breeze was rippling the sea. I felt refreshed, and invigorated by my sleep; for the first time, hope revived in my heart.

Another whole day passed in the same

manner, except that we got into a current which the men declared was taking us out of the destined course, and so strong, as almost to set at defiance the efforts of the rowers to get out of it. The breeze stiffening a little at the same time, they had a short but sharp struggle.

Towards evening, one of the men called out "A sail! a sail!" This exclamation occasioned a strange commotion among us. Anxiously we strained our eager eyes in search of it. No one but himself could see it, and he soon lost sight of it, if, indeed, he did see it. The night came on again, and the moon arose, but obscured by clouds, so that we had little light from her beams. Another day was about to break, or rather was breaking, when again the cry of "A sail! a sail! a ship!" arose; "right ahead! close on our stem!"

In an instant the sleepers were awake; every tongue was going, every eye peering

through the twilight of the coming day, at the huge dark body which seemed about to overwhelm us. The back strokes of the rowers gave us a retrograde movement, and sent the boat to a safer distance, to advance again after a short parley.

It was a trading vessel from Stralsund, laden with timber, bound for Alicant, commanded by Captain Thorwaldson, a Dane. He spoke English pretty well, and knew a little French, but Spanish better than either.

He listened to our story, but refused to take us on board. After a little consideration, he said he would take the women, but had no room for the men. It was now our turn to hesitate, and consider whether we should quit our present protectors, to place ourselves in the hands of strangers. But reflecting on what we had already undergone from the minor miseries of our unwomanly situation, we gladly accepted the offer, and were drawn up the ship's side,

after taking a hasty leave of our companions, to whom the Captain gave a bag of biscuit, and such information as was necessary to enable them to reach the nearest port, to which he being also bound, we should probably see them again in a day or two.

This was a blessed change in our fate. Oh, how glad we were to stretch our cramped limbs in the cabin, which the good and kind-hearted Captain Thorwaldson gave up to our use. That little smoky cabin, what a paradise it was to us, under all the circumstances of our late and present position! How thankfully, how fervently we blessed that protecting Providence which had released us from such an irksome life, —saved us from such dangers. And then how we laughed, when a bull-headed seaman put his head into the cabin with the Captain's compliments, and begged to know whether we would *give him leave* to take

his dinner with us. Yes, we laughed heartily, merrily. We were so happy, any thing would have made us laugh! How disposed we were to love that dear, good, rough, and ugly Captain; who, picking us up, wretched vagabonds on the highway of life, associated with a crew of sailors, nevertheless treated us as if he had known us to be entitled to be considered as ladies.

We sat down to dinner together, a most cordial and comfortable party. Our new friend had evidently great satisfaction in helping us to what he thought the best of every thing, and seeing with what a good appetite we ate it. And now, in these my pampered days, I much doubt whether I could swallow food which then appeared to me delicious. Such is every thing in life. Nothing is bad or good, but by comparison with something better or worse. On learning some farther particulars of our history, he seemed greatly interested in the

relation, and to entertain a lively sympathy in listening to the hardships and perils we had undergone.

"Upon my life," he said, "you might make a pretty story-book out of your adventures; but the landsmen would not believe it to be true. They little know what strange things do really happen to people who go to sea; and the Roman (meaning romance) writers do spin such monstrous impossible yarns, that those who read them get their brains quite addled, and don't know the truth when they see it!"

He told us his whole crew were no more than four men and a boy, with himself as a sixth; so that it would have been a most imprudent measure to have taken on board five strange men.

We did not finish our voyage so quickly as we expected. A strong head-wind got up, that made our progress very slow. The ship, too, was a heavy sailer, so that it was

the third day after quitting the boat, before we made the port, and were safe in harbour.

"Now, my dears," said the Captain, "you shall go on shore with a man who will show you the way to the house of a person, where you will be safe and comfortable till such time as you can hear from your friends. She is an honest woman, and gets her living by making *falballas*, and head-gear for the ladies. Maybe you may help her a bit, and that will be a set-off against your board."

What a lively and bustling scene presented itself, as we followed our guide through the busy throng in the crowded streets! What a contrast, to the silent solitude of the Island we had so lately left! We reached unmolested the house of Dame Pereira, after a long walk, which was a great recreation to us, and to perform which we spent at least three hours; every thing was so new, so strange, so interesting to us. Every minute we were stopping to ask our

conductor a question, or to examine some fresh object.

We were received by our hostess, a woman little favoured by nature, and of most ungracious manners, with a cold constraint that bordered on incivility: and it struck me forcibly, that, had she followed her inclinations, she would have refused us admittance; for the Captain's messenger twice repeated his message, before she invited us to enter and sit down.

She was occupied with what the Captain called *falballas*, various articles of millinery, in the fabrication of which two young women were assisting her, with whom and herself we soon after sat down to dinner.

We were hungry after our long walk, and by no means disposed to be difficult; but the dose of garlic, with which the principal dish had been flavoured, was so large, that we ate very sparingly of it; contenting

ourselves with the bread, and some radishes, which were both good. This gave our sour hostess offence. She made some observation which neither I nor my countrywoman understood, from our slender knowledge of the Spanish language; but that its meaning was offensive I guessed from the flush on the cheek of Inez.

However, we were too thankful and happy to take offence at trifles. Gay visions of the future were dancing before our eyes. We *would not* be affronted. The only thing of value possessed by us was my watch, which having been secured by a ribbon round my neck when I left the Nautilus, had been preserved. As soon as we had dined, I put it into the hands of Inez, and desired her to offer it to Dame Pereira, on the supposition that the evident ill will she bore us was on account of the expense we were likely to occasion. She took it in her hand, but on learning it be-

longed to me, she returned it and refused to take it. I was surprised; but, willing to mollify her, if possible, I begged that we might be allowed to assist her,—that she would give us some work. She appeared to hesitate, as if undecided whether to accept or refuse this offer; but she was pressed for time, and in need of more help than she could then command, to finish certain articles, (as we afterwards learned.) After a short delay we were all three employed.

I am almost ashamed to say what a childish delight I felt when the needles and thread were given me. It was more than six months since I had seen these implements, whose familiar use, whose value, is best known to females, who, like me, had been obliged to make a smart appearance, with slender means to furnish a wardrobe. The next day our good friend Captain Thorwaldson came to "see after us," as he

said. I told him the history of the watch. He laughed heartily.

"Ah, she is a bit of a crab," he said; "but you must not mind her. You are heretics. She is afraid your watch would bring her ill luck. Give it to me, my dear; I shall make a better bargain for you than she would, as you wish to dispose of it."

As soon as he was gone we returned to our work. My hands had become hard and rough, from the unfeminine tasks they had sometimes to execute while on the Island, so that at first I found it difficult to manage the small needles. Now again they began to resume their supple softness, and to look something more like those of a lady. The millinery advanced surprisingly, thanks to the assiduity of myself and Inez; as for my countrywoman she did not assist us much.

"Her fingers had bones in them," she

said, "and were not so pliant as ours. She never was fond of stitching."

But then she was so active and useful in the more bustling department, so willing and so busy in the domestic arrangements, that the ire and ill-humour of our hostess insensibly thawed. Her cloudy countenance cleared up into a sort of sunshine at times, and she condescended to show us some civility. It was two days before the Captain came again, when he put into my hand a lot of Spanish coins as the price of the watch, amounting to nearly ten pounds sterling.

This was far more than I expected to obtain by the sale of it, and I felt quite rich by the possession of such a sum. After thanking him for the trouble he had taken, I requested him to offer a part of the money to Madame Pereira for our board, which he did; but she would not take a penny. She was gracious enough to admit

that we were of great use to her, and that our services amply remunerated her for the expense we occasioned.

"I told you she was an honest woman, although there is a little crab-juice in her blood, and she does not like heretics," he said, his broad pock-marked face dilating with satisfaction at the happy turn affairs were taking for "his passengers," as he called us, in whose fate he felt a kindly interest. He was not a man of the world, and did not, therefore, set us down for suspicious characters because found in an unpleasant situation. We were forlorn and wretched, but still, as he himself expressed it, "looking like decent and well behaved women," and he had been a kind friend to us.

We were greatly surprised at hearing nothing of our comrades, of whom we often talked, and about whom we began to be uneasy. We had been so long companions

in misfortune, and owed to them also so much gratitude for the care and kindness they had bestowed on us, that we could not but be anxious to know what had become of them. The first use we made of our money was to purchase writing materials, and the first leisure hour to employ them in writing letters to our friends. No sooner were these despatched than our next care was to recruit our tattered and very scanty wardrobe. We agreed that we must be very economical in laying out our money, and would therefore buy only such things as were absolutely necessary. But, good lack! when we had made out our catalogue, it presented such a list as our whole fund would be insufficient to pay for; and we were obliged to cut it down to the most necessary necessaries.

We were about to sally forth under the guidance of one of the young women employed by Madame Pereira, in order to make

our purchases, when she, on learning our intention, most graciously proposed to go with us herself. We thankfully accepted the offer. I have little doubt she saved us at least half the sum we expended. To do her justice, she was always rigidly just in her transactions with us, and quite as careful of our money as if it had been her own. She neither imposed on us herself, nor suffered any other person to do so. This was by no means the case with her more good-humoured, good-looking husband, a Portuguese by birth; who always executed our little commissions with the utmost alacrity and civility, but never failed to make us pay toll for his agency. This sometimes occasioned what our captain would have called "a bit of a breeze" between them. He was a tailor by trade. His shop being in another part of the town we saw little of him; a circumstance that pleased us all; for, though his manners

were very bland, and his language very courteous, we began one and all to dislike him as we saw more of him.

Our surly hostess, on the contrary, spite of her plain person and repellant humour, gradually won our confidence and respect; and we soon learned to look upon her as a friend to whom we might apply for advice in all our little difficulties.

We had been established in our new domicile nearly ten days before we heard any tidings of the men with whom we had left the Island, when at length we had a visit from Jacques Bontemps. He came alone. On inquiring for Le Martineau and the others, he said that after we left them they had again got into a current, which, aided by a stiff breeze, in spite of all their efforts drove them quite out of their course, and carried them so far to the eastward that, after some hours struggling in vain against it, they calculated they must then be much nearer to Guadama

than to Alicant, and therefore determined to make for that port; which they reached, and found a French merchantman in want of hands. Le Martineau and the others applied for berths, and were engaged by the commander, who also agreed to buy the boat. They divided the money among them; and, with his share of it, he had made his way to Alicant, "to see what had become of his mistresses, and whether he could be of any further service to them."

Poor Jacques looked very sad and melancholy, and the flush on his cheek, as he asked for my country-woman, now for the first time made me suspect the state of his heart; and I took the opportunity to say, "She is gone to the post-office with a letter for her husband." Jacques sighed, but showed no surprise. He had learned from Captain Thorwaldson that she was married. All this terrible havoc had been made in his heart by the absence of the wedding-

ring; which had been removed from her finger, in compliance with some superstitious idea she attached to wearing it during her separation from her husband.

He saw that I guessed his secret; and, with a sort of half confidence he said, "I know she is married, and I only came to take leave of her —— and my other mistresses. I should like to see her once more to take leave of her."

While we were talking, I heard her voice, not that any body understood her; but still she was exercising her tongue. That Jacques heard her too was evident, for he trembled and changed countenance. I was really sorry for the poor fellow. She came in as usual hastily, stood a moment still with surprise, and then flew to shake him by the hand, and gave him such a welcome as quite overpowered him: uttering a volume of kind words, not one of which he knew the meaning of. We

now seated ourselves. He related again his adventures since we parted, I acting as interpreter; and thus we conversed for some time. At length he got up to go; but sat down again lingering, and reluctant to depart.

At last he rose up a second time, and courageously took leave of us both. There were tears, I believe, in the eyes of all, as he slowly crossed the room, with a most dejected air. We had been fellow-sufferers, and we owed him much for the unremitting care and kindness with which he had watched over us. He was going in search of a master he had no hopes of finding—whom he believed to be no longer in existence. We should never see him again. I went with him to the door, repeating my thanks and good wishes, when he said to me in a low and tremulous voice, "I am going to leave her for ever! Do you think she would give me a salute at parting?"

I said, "I am sure she will not refuse this little civility to one to whom we owe so much!"

I told her his request, and hinted at the mischief the suppression of the wedding ring had occasioned. I was not quite sure whether the favour would be granted; for she had always been very prudent and decorous in her intercourse with the man; but she no sooner understood the state of the case, than, to my astonishment, she went to him, kissed him heartily, and burst into a fit of crying. Such a blubbering match as then took place between them! while I—I hardly know whether I laughed or cried; but I rather believe I did both. "He had saved money, and could have kept her like a lady," he told me, as he wiped his eyes, and at last departed.

During the remaining hours of that day, she scarcely uttered a dozen words: an unmistakeable proof how much she was

affected. She was a true and faithful wife to her husband. It was only friendship she entertained for the honest Swiss. Nevertheless it was better for all parties, I thought, that they should not longer remain together. We returned to our work, waiting patiently for letters, in reply to those we had written. In operating on the materials which were placed in my hands, I had given so new a style to them, (being simply some of my own English fashions) as to surprise Madame Pereira. Novelty being the life and soul of millinery, they took prodigiously with the Spanish ladies. We could hardly supply them fast enough for the customers of our hostess; who, pleased with the addition thus made to her fame and fortune, treated us now very kindly; bounding the efforts of her religious zeal, to putting up daily prayers for the conversion of the useful heretics to the true faith.

A few days afterwards, I received the

letter I so anxiously expected from England. I had not written to my father, nor my sisters; but to an old friend of our family, who lived near them, and who had known me from my birth. For this I had many motives. First, I feared the sight of my handwriting—a letter from one whom they had loved, and believed to be dead—might produce a startling and pernicious effect. Secondly, I felt sure my father, on learning my situation, would have transmitted money, which he could ill spare, to defray my expenses on my journey home. To my kind old friend, I had no hesitation in telling the motives which induced me to write to him, rather than to them. The reply I received was to the following effect.

After saying they were all well, and nearly in the same circumstances as when I left home, he continued, "You can scarcely conceive with what mingled feelings of astonishment and joy I read your letter;

the feeling of fear with which I broke the seal, lest the handwriting which I recognised, should defraud the hopes it had excited. Your father and sisters are still ignorant of your existence. In obedience to your request, I have forborne to communicate the glad tidings to them. They have recovered the first heavy burst of grief, at the loss they believe they have sustained, and are mourning for you with more temperate sorrow. But, I beseech you to remember the joys of life are not so numerous that we can afford to fling away any of them. You have the power to make those to whom you belong happy—to remove at once the grief by which they are oppressed; and you refuse, or delay to do so. I respect the motives which prompt this cruel kindness on your part. To obviate any farther difficulties I have placed a sum of money at your disposal, which you will receive on applying to the Bank of Men-

doza & Co., Callé del Sol; who have also instructions to inquire for some reputable escort, under the protection of which you may return to your native land, and your still weeping relatives. You know the sum in question cannot be an object of importance to me, and that you can take your own time for repaying it. You can, therefore, have no hesitation in making use of it. The thanks I expect, are in the announcement that you are on your road home.

"And now, my dear Miss Mitford, you must suffer your old friend to offer you a little advice on another subject. The short narrative, or rather sketches, of the adventures you have encountered, are so extraordinary that had I not known you for a truth-loving child, and an honourable, right-principled young woman, I tell you candidly, I should have given no credit to them. Those who do not know you so

well as I do, will *not* believe circumstances so entirely out of the ordinary course of events. Moreover, you have been placed in situations, such as it is scarcely possible for a young female to have escaped from without disgrace. The world is generally in the habit of associating misfortune and misconduct; more especially where women are concerned.

"You will never obtain credit for having so dexterously extricated yourself from positions so embarrassing, unscathed. My advice to you is to suppress this narrative. Let none but those who are related and attached to you, hear the strange tale. As to the young Spanish lady you mention as under your care, surely you need not delay your return on her account. She is in her native land, and will doubtless be quickly reclaimed by her family.

"It cannot be difficult to find some respectable protection for *her*, until they do so.

Come, then, my dear Miss —— let me announce to your father and your sisters, that you are not only living but on your journey home."

Thus concluded the kind letter of my old friend. What a tumult it awoke in my heart! What a mixture of joy and sorrow — of resolutions hastily formed, and as hastily abandoned! My dear father, my young sisters, all well — all as I left them, but sorrowing for my loss—I would go to them; my kind friend had furnished the means,—I would set off at once. Then came calmer, more prudent thoughts. This money so kindly offered, if accepted, must still be repaid, some time or other. And my little Inez, who had been placed in my hands under circumstances so singular, about whose history so much mystery hung, should I now abandon her? No, the will of Providence had made me her guardian. I would not give her up to any other

stranger — to none but her own relations.

As if to confirm my resolution on this subject, Inez herself came dancing into the room with a letter for Lalo, as she called my countrywoman; and on seeing symptoms of unusual emotion in my face, flew to me; and gazing earnestly at me, she said, putting her arms round my neck, "You have been weeping! You are unhappy! You have had bad news?"

"No, Inez," I replied, "I have good news; my relations are all well. The only cause of pain I have, is in knowing that I must soon leave you."

"No, no. You will not," she said, caressing me: "you will stay with me here, or take me to that dear England you talk about so often, and that I want so much to see. Yes, if you must go, I will go with you. Papa is always with his regiment; I cannot live with *him;* and my

aunt—my aunt ——" She stopped, her face flushed, and she continued in a low earnest tone, "I don't love my aunt! I believe this is wrong, but I cannot help it. Why is it that I should love you so much better than I do her? I have not known you half so long." And finding I made no reply, she answered the question herself. "I fancy it is because she does not like me. I am sure she does not, although papa thinks she is very fond of me."

I sat down then, and wrote a long letter to my father, explaining my situation, and motives for postponing my return to England, for a short time longer. This letter I enclosed in another to our mutual friend; leaving to him to deliver it, when and where his own judgment might dictate.

The letter for Mrs. Muggins contained a remittance from her brother, who was employed in the dock-yard at Woolwich, to whom she had written for means to

defray her expenses back to England; where she was anxious to go for many reasons; but, nevertheless, she would not consent to go without me.

"It had pleased Providence," she said, "to make us partners in strange adventures. We had left England together, and with God's blessing, we would return to it together; whatever might betide us afterwards."

It appeared a strange circumstance, that we should have received answers to our letters from foreign lands so promptly, while those written by Inez to her father and her aunt remained without reply. The one addressed to her father indeed might not have been received, as she knew not certainly where he was; but the residence of her aunt was on the banks of the Segura, not thirty leagues distant. However, we could only wait, and hope some intelligence of one or the other would soon arrive.

Mrs. Muggins, now in possession of money, declared her intention of repaying the small sum I had expended on her account, from the fund furnished by my watch. She was far from being rich; but as I was much poorer, I did not hesitate about taking it. It was a fine cool clear day, and, glad to get a walk, we all three set off together to the bankers, where the bill was to be paid; Inez undertook to guide us. By inquiries now and then, we arrived safely, got the money, and were on our return, when, in passing a short street which opened into the Callé del Norte, where Madame Pereira lived, Inez suddenly exclaimed, "Ah! there's Diego!—Yes, it *is* Diego!" and drawing her arm from mine, was about to spring away; but the name came to my recollection, and I held her fast.

The man passed on without heeding us, but I had time to see him distinctly. He

was of ordinary appearance, with the exception of his complexion, which was of a swarthy tint, far deeper than any Spaniard I had yet seen, and that peculiar snake-like glitter in his eyes, which I have never seen before or since, except in a native of Italy or Morocco. As soon as he was gone, I said, "Diego is your aunt's servant?"

"Yes."

"Whose voice you believed you heard, on the night when they were putting you into the boat?"

"Yes, I thought it was his voice. I might have been mistaken. I wanted to ask him about my cousins."

"Well, Inez," I said, "if he is still in the service of your aunt, he probably brings a letter or message for you; we shall hear when we return. We reached our domicile unmolested: but no messenger, no letter had arrived. Two more days past, and still no tidings came. On the evening of the

second day, I had need of instructions from Madame Pereira, relative to some work with which I was occupied; and as she was not in the room where we carried on our operations, I descended in search of her to a small room at the back of the house. She was not there; but near the brazier sat two men smoking, one of them was Pereira, the other I knew instantly. It was Diego, the man we had seen on our way from the banker's. They appeared to be so earnestly engaged in conversation, that my appearance at the entrance, and subsequent retreat from it, was unnoticed by them.

This was a strange circumstance; for what could this man have come to the house Inez inhabited, unless for the purpose of bringing some message from his mistress? That such was not the cause of his coming was evident, since none had been delivered. He might be an acquaintance of Pereira's.

Business, or chance might have brought him to the house. Pereira was a tailor; it was not unlikely he made clothes for this man; and yet I was uneasy, disturbed, and agitated at the sight of him. When I recollected all the strange and mysterious circumstances attending the abduction of Inez, in which it appeared probable this man had a part, I trembled for her safety. Now, for the first time, I remembered how utterly powerless I was to protect her from danger, should any arise. I had postponed my voyage to my native country on her account, and because I would not abandon her; and now how could I defend her? I, a foreigner, without friends, needing protection myself. No means had I: none, save native intelligence, and an earnest will.

I sat down to reflect steadily on her situation, and on mine. I half resolved to consult Madame Pereira. I believed her to be a well-principled woman, and she

was already partially acquainted with the history of Inez. But from this course I was deterred, by the liaison that seemed to exist between her husband and the man I feared. Once I thought of applying to the British consul. As a British subject I might perhaps obtain counsel and protection for her and myself. Then came the thought of the strange tale I must tell.

I must begin by saying we came from a place of which I knew not even the name. The French sailors, indeed, said it was known as the "Rocher de Sables," but I believe it was not so. My father's friend had emphatically warned me not to relate my adventures unless to those who knew me well. Should I do so under circumstances such as those in which I now found myself, an unknown friendless foreigner, what could I expect but ridicule or insult?

Our kind-hearted friend, the Danish

Captain, had sailed, and was on his way to a distant port. I could apply to the Alcalde or Mayor, and request him to place the poor child under safe guardianship until her father should claim her. This appeared to me, after long reflecting on it, the only rational plan; and this I determined to adopt without loss of time. I went to bed with a more quiet mind when I had made this decision. In the morning I got up something earlier, and was seeking our hostess to mention my intended absence of an hour or two, without putting her farther in my confidence, when she met me on the stair, and placed in my hands a letter addressed to Inez de ——. She was waiting ready to accompany me to the office of the magistrate. I gave her the letter, watching her countenance as she read it. "Ah, from papa!" she exclaimed, with a pleased look, which soon faded into a grave expression, as she returned it to me.

"From papa, Inez," I said, "and you announce what makes my heart beat with joy, as if it were a misfortune."

"He is going to place me in a convent till he can come for me. I don't like to go into a convent. The nuns will never cease tormenting me to become a nun. Papa is far away. It may be a long time before he comes. It is easier to get into a convent than to get out again," she replied.

These were strange ideas to have entered the head of a girl not yet twelve years old, and served to moderate the joy I felt at the arrival of the letter; for though so young, she possessed great intelligence, aud certainly knew the character of these religious communities better than myself. The letter was not long. After speaking of the delight he had felt at hearing tidings of her once again, he requested her to hold herself in readiness to accompany the person the reverend mother, superior of the convent of

las Santas Campanillas, might send to conduct her to the Callé de Messa Mayor, where the convent was situated.

My business now was to reconcile Inez to the measure her father had decided on. Unhappily she had conceived a strong fear and dislike to it; and though she never dreamed of disputing his will, she awaited with a grave and melancholy face the arrival of the expected agent of the Abbess. Early in the afternoon of the same day she came; a quiet, respectable-looking female, in a plain neat equipage. My poor little friend was placed beside her weeping bitterly at our separation; I also could not restrain my tears, although my mind was lightened of a load of care and anxiety on her account. Mrs. Muggins too wiped her eyes with the corner of her apron, after kissing her as heartily as she had done Jacques Bontemps a short time before.

It was on the Thursday she was removed.

The rules of the establishment did not admit visiters on Fridays or Saturdays, we were told; but on the ensuing Sunday, by applying to the porteress of the convent, we should be allowed to see her. With this anticipated meeting to comfort us all, we returned to our work for the few hours of the day which remained after her departure, and then went quietly to bed. The next day we destined to a full discussion on the subject of our return to England, and the best means of getting there, as we were now both anxious to do.

But how little we know what "the morrow may bring forth!" On the morrow I had, indeed, a discussion; but not with my countrywoman, nor on the subject proposed. I had scarcely finished my breakfast, when I was told two gentlemen requested to see me, "They were waiting for me in the Magaña," the servant said. The Magaña was the room Madame Pereira

appropriated to the reception of ladies, her customers, or other respectable persons. On entering, I saw one gentleman seated at the farther end of the apartment; the other had advanced to the door, as if expecting me, — a tall and handsome man, dark, of erect and gentlemanly appearance. He addressed me in Spanish with some civil words of ordinary greeting.

I replied that I understood something of Spanish, but that I could not converse in it. He then said to me in French, "You have under your care, Madame, a young lady? Inez de ——"

"Inez de —— was under my care, sir, but she is so no longer."

"You have sent her away, then?"

"She is under the protection of persons appointed by her nearest relatives."

"Her nearest relative is her father."

"Of course he is."

"You mean to assert that Inez is under

the care of persons deputed by her father to take charge of her?"

"I do, sir."

The stranger's brows contracted, and he was silent for a moment; he then said, "I presume you have no objection to say where she is now to be found?"

"I beg your pardon, sir; but really I do not feel bound to reply to these interrogations, on the part of a stranger — a gentleman whose name I have never heard."

"If I tell you my name will you then answer my questions?"

It was now my turn to be silent. I felt assured he was an emissary of that hateful aunt, that woman who, I had always believed, for some vile purpose of her own, placed Inez in the hands of the Moors. I resolved to tell him nothing; and I replied, "I will not deceive you, sir. I have reasons for refusing to answer your inquiries; and,

I tell you candidly, I will give you no information on the subject."

He turned from me with an angry face, and joined the man in black, who was at the other end of the room. They spoke in the Spanish language, and I caught but little of the import of their words, except when he said, "She will answer no questions. We must proceed!" Willing to terminate this not very pleasant interview, with the civil ceremony of a slight curtsey, I turned to leave the room.

On opening the door into a sort of lobby, I found, to my astonishment, my passage barred by a man in the official costume of the judicial power, while two other men in plain clothes were seated near him; at the same time the gentleman who had questioned me advanced again, and, with something like a smile agitating his dark moustaches, closed the door and said, "You have the manners and appearance of a lady, Madam.

I am grieved to have the task of announcing to you that you are in the charge of these gentlemen, officers of justice. You must have the goodness to take a seat at this table." So saying, he took my hand and led me to the place where the man in black remained. I now discovered that he was a magistrate. The door again opened. The two persons from the lobby entered, one of whom was the *escribano de justicia*, the other a sworn interpreter. They also seated themselves. The one prepared to listen to, and translate into Spanish; the other to write down the replies I should make to the questions the magistrate was about to put to me.

"Your name, Madam?" said he.

I was dumb with surprise, not unmingled with indignation. I was a prisoner it seemed, and about to undergo an examination; and for what? I confess I was a little frightened, but being also rather

angry, this served to stiffen my courage. Instead of giving my name, I said, "Before I answer any question, I must know by what authority, and for what cause I am interrogated."

The interpreter translated, and the clerk wrote.

"You are accused," said the magistrate. "of withholding, and refusing to produce the person of La Señora Inez de ——, or to give any account of her to her nearest friend and lawful guardian."

"Who is my accuser?"

"Il Señor Joachim de —— here present, father of the minor," was the reply to my demand.

"Does he call himself Il Señor Joachim."

"He does. He seeks his daughter at your hands. The court will compel you to produce her."

"He is an impostor!" I said, now warm with indignation. "If he were really the

father of my dear little friend, he would have known she had been safely conveyed to the asylum he himself assigned her. He is seeking to get hold of her for some bad purpose. I rejoice to say she is beyond his reach!"

The magistrate, when this was put into Spanish, looked surprised and puzzled. He turned his eyes to the man I had denounced as an impostor, as if to examine him. On *his* face a very decided smile now gleamed for a moment, and then gave place to the grave, and somewhat anxious expression it had borne the moment before, as he turned to me and said, "You declare, Madam, that Inez was conveyed away by persons appointed by her father. By what channel were his orders sent?"

I was going to say by letter, but I checked myself, and replied gravely, "If you are her father, you cannot but know this better than myself."

His face flushed, his eyes sparkled, and he burst forth with a vehemence, strongly contrasting with the very grave air he had hitherto borne, and he said rapidly in French, "I beseech you, Madam, not to drive me to extremities; do not force me to utter harsh words. But you must excuse me if I say you are playing a strange part. You affect great interest in the fate of my child, and yet persist in denying me the information necessary to secure her safety.

"Cannot you fancy the possibility that I *may* be her father, notwithstanding your belief of the contrary? My daughter is said to resemble me strongly. Do me the favour to look at me, and see if you cannot discover something to give you more confidence in me."

There was no need to tell me to look at him, for I was greatly startled by his manner and his words. My eyes were fixed

upon his face. The magistrate was about to speak, but he held up his hand, as if beseeching his forbearance for a moment, till I answered his appeal. He *did* resemble Inez decidedly — strongly. How could I have been so blind and stupid? What a strange mixture of ideas and sensations were whirling through my brain and heart! My eyes were suddenly opened to the truth. I was heartily ashamed of the part I had been playing; but the predominant feeling was joy that the dear father, about whom my poor Inez spoke so often, and with such fond affection, was actually before me, ready to rescue her from the grasp of enemies to whom I had ignorantly given her up.

The conviction of this fact no sooner burst upon me than, with the wild impulse of my excited mind, I sprang from my seat, holding out both my hands, almost choked with an hysterical rising in my throat. I

could with difficulty utter, "Forgive me, forgive me! I do believe you are the father of Inez!" and then sank, sobbing at his feet. He placed me on a seat—soothed and caressed me, as if I had also been his daughter. Heaven bless him! How I have loved him ever since! In a few minutes I was calm again, and now as eager to tell him every thing, as I had hitherto been pertinaciously resolved to say nothing. As soon as I could speak I said hurriedly, "The letter—you wrote a letter?—No, it must have been a forgery. Yet, Inez believed it to come from you. I will show it you." I started up as I finished this incoherent speech, intending to fetch the letter which was still in my possession, but he said:—

"No, no, it would but waste time. If you received a letter, said to come from me, it *is* a forgery. I wrote none. I obtained leave of absence, and came off at once to

my child, on receiving news of her return to the country from which she had so mysteriously disappeared. But I had nearly the whole of Spain to cross, for I was with my regiment at Lobera, in the province of Arragon, when it reached me. I arrived early yesterday morning, and came straight here. On requesting to see my daughter, I was invited to enter; and a man, who announced himself as the master of the house, told me she was no longer here. She had been sent away, by *los Inglesas* who had the care of her."

"Oh, it is false, false!" I exclaimed, interrupting him, "she *was* then here. Had you but insisted on seeing me, or my countrywoman, all would have been well."

"I did insist," he said, "but I was told you were absent also. There was a degree of hesitation and confusion in the manner of the man, as he replied to my questions, which made me suspicious. I

pressed him more closely, and he confessed he had been guilty of great negligence, in suffering you, whom he knew to be a bigoted and fanatic Protestant, to remove from his house, Inez, a Catholic: and, as he has every reason to believe, for the express purpose of perverting her religious principles." This short dialogue, though rapidly uttered, and occupying but a few minutes of time, wearied the magistrate, who knew nothing of the language in which it was spoken.

He said gravely, "This is a most irregular way of proceeding! A crime has been committed. A young lady, heiress presumptive to considerable property, has twice, within six months, been clandestinely and feloniously removed from the protection of her relatives, for some evil purpose. Her natural guardian, and nearest relative, has appealed to the laws for justice. A legal investigation must take place. I

must have no more of these interruptions."

All this I understood well enough. I could speak but little, but my ear was formed to the sound of it. I remained silent, but at this moment, as if in mockery of his judicial solemnity, a scuffling and uproar was heard at the door. The clerk rose to ascertain the cause. On opening it, my poor countrywoman rushed in, (spite of the efforts made by the officials to prevent her,) her hair dishevelled, her dress in disorder, and, notwithstanding the coldness of the weather, in a glowing heat. My long absence had made her uneasy, she came to see what I was about. Being refused admittance, and unable to obtain any information, from her ignorance of the language, she had become desperate and outrageous. The magistrate peremptorily commanded her removal. She refused to go. They were about to remove her by

force, when I ventured to suggest, that her evidence might be necessary.

"Does she speak Spanish?" said he.

"No."

"French?"

"No. She speaks only English," I replied, "but I can translate it into French, and —"

"Very good!" said he, knitting his brows most awfully, and curling his nose with scorn at my ignorance, "Very regular and satisfactory. By your help we may drive the replies of the deponent through half a dozen languages; but yet, you will not be a sworn officer of our court; and therefore you will be pleased to hold your tongue." He was very angry; and I, aware that time was precious, earnestly entreated Mrs. Muggins to go quietly, assuring her that all was going well, and that I should soon be able to join her. She obeyed.

The prosy and tiresome examination

began again, and was at last finished. Had I been allowed to tell my tale my own way, a fourth part of the time it occupied would have sufficed. The letter was produced, numbered, and impounded, as an important document; and the leader of this little legal band, now apparently made the discovery, that a great deal of time had been expended; for the various papers were hastily collected, and the prosy legalists abruptly departed. With them, too, went the father of Inez. In passing, he said to me in a low voice, "It is better you should know that you are under the surveillance of the police, a sort of prisoner at large. If you go out, you will be followed by an officer of justice. With your permission, I will wait on you tomorrow morning." I gladly assented, and so ended the first meeting between us, which began with a chapter of cross purposes.

The next morning I dressed myself with

more care than I had hitherto bestowed on my toilet, in expectation of the promised visit. On sitting down to breakfast, I found a strange alteration in the manner of my hostess, which had, for some time, been civil and gracious. She had relapsed again into her humour of sulky dissatisfaction, and muttering discontent. The cause of this sudden change I could by no means divine, from the ejaculations and half words with which she indulged her spleen. Such as, "Wretched heretics!" "Always bring bad luck," &c. I was too much engrossed by my own ideas to heed her much; anxiously waiting for the news I hoped to hear of my poor little friend. But it was late in the afternoon ere my visiter arrived, and then I obtained information which explained the mystery. Her husband and Diego had been both arrested, and were in prison. It appeared they had both absconded, but the vigilance and activity

of the officers of justice, sharpened by a promise of reward, had discovered their retreat, and secured them; but hitherto no information of importance had been elicited from them.

After a short conversation, Señor Joachim, (or, as I shall henceforth call him, Major de —— for he held that rank in the Spanish service,) again departed with the intention of trying his rhetoric on Father Gregorio, the spiritual guide of Madame Pereira, on the natural supposition that the family secrets were better known to him than to any other person. Whether he employed the same means with the reverend father, as he had done with the sub-officials, I know not; but the result was the arrest of two more members of the household,—a female servant, and one of the young women who aided in the business: the latter was said to be a greater favourite with the master of the house than with the mistress, and from

her was ultimately obtained a clue to the mystery which enveloped the fate of the child. With eager impatience I waited for the customary visits, from which alone I obtained information of what was going on. These were constant, daily, sometimes twice in the day.

A week had passed in this manner when, towards the evening, the Major came with intelligence that he believed he had at length discovered the place where Inez was concealed. To my great astonishment, he added, "She is in the house of a countryman of yours, an Englishman, who does not bear a very perfect character. Nevertheless, I have many reasons for preferring my own agency to that of the police. But I do not speak his language. Have you friendship enough for my child, who already owes you so much,—have you confidence enough in me to go with me to his house?"

"Both, both," I said, hastily; "I will

run and put on my cloak? Let us go at once!"

He smiled, and looked pleased, but said, "No, not to-night. We are not all of us quite so free to go when and where we choose. You have forgotten you are a prisoner. We must have the sanction and protection of the police. In the morning I will come for you."

On the following morning, accordingly, he came. We sallied forth, and I looked round for the police guard, who, I was told, were keeping watch over us: but I saw none. Soon, however, I perceived, as we quitted the street, two men of ordinary appearance, in common clothes, pacing quietly after us. They belonged to the secret police, and wore no uniform.

As we went on our way, the Major related to me several interesting particulars of the information they had obtained, relative to this strange affair. Among others,

he told me they had ascertained, that Messrs. Diego and Pereira had arranged their plan for the removal of myself and Mrs. Muggins, as well as that of Inez, in order to leave no clue by which to trace her; but having suffered Madame Pereira to become acquainted with it, she had interposed, and prevented the execution; declaring, that having taken us under her care, though against her will, she would not consent to our leaving her house, without their first informing her more fully why we were to go, and where. This unexpected opposition had occasioned difficulty and delay, which proved fatal to them.

"Good, upright Madame Pereira!" I said, "she shall henceforth say and do whatever she will, without offence to me. I will bear and forbear. She may be sulky and uncivil; I shall still regard her with respect and gratitude. But how

is it that she ultimately suffered Inez to be removed?"

"She was duped," he replied. "She believes even now, that Inez is under the care of Donna Isabel de Guzman, superior of the convent in the Callé de Messa Mayor."

Our conversation was now broken up, by our reaching the house to which we were going. It was a respectable looking building. The door was opened by a well-dressed domestic, by whom we were ushered into a handsomely furnished saloon; and almost immediately, Mr. Smithson made his appearance in the form of a middle-aged, middle-sized man, with nothing particular about him, except a pale olive complexion, and a sort of gleaming quickness, and cunning expression, that from time to time beamed from his eyes, and lighted up his face during our visit. He received us very civilly, and as our business was to conciliate, we were of course civil too.

I accosted him as my countryman, to which he replied, "Ha! yes I'm an Englander. Will you please to announce your commands?" I said we had been informed that Inez de —— had been placed under his care. We came to relieve him of the charge.

"Oh yes," he said, "she has been *consigned* to me. I am a merchant — a man of business. I have no objection to a fair deal. What are you disposed to give for her? I suppose you are related to her?"

I said I was only a friend. The gentleman who stood beside me was her father. If it was his intention to make a sale of her, he had better name his terms.

"Well, I perceive you are a judgematical young person, and know how a deal should begin," he observed quietly. "She is a handsome young lady, he won't grudge a thousand dollars for her?" I stated this modest proposal to my com-

panion, in whom it excited a burst of indignant wrath, which prompted him to apply sundry appellations to the proposer, not at all flattering; and he concluded with, "I am half inclined to call in the officers of police and seize him." But a very short reflection taught him the impolicy of such a proceeding, and he became calm again; when suddenly a fresh difficulty started.

"How do we know," said he, "that my poor child is here at all? Ask the rascal what proof he can give, that he has the power to restore her to me."

During this dialogue, this strange man sat quietly waiting, with a twinkling eye, and a half suppressed smile on his face, as if amused with the anger which dared not show itself, and the compulsory submission to which his visiter was reduced. On my suggesting the doubt, he took a bell from the table, near which we sat—rang, and

a well dressed female opened the door; the very woman who had conveyed Inez from the house of Madame Pereira.

"Request the young lady to favour me with her company." The woman disappeared, and in a few minutes, Inez walked into the room with a grave face, and a somewhat melancholy air: but in a moment she caught sight of her father and myself; and, bounding forward, she threw herself into his arms, sobbing as if her heart would break, then quitted him and flew to me. The poor child was beside herself with joy.

When we were all a little more calm, Mr. Smithson said to me. "Ask the young lady whether she has any thing to complain of since she has resided in my house." I had no need to explain. Inez understood what he said; and, like a gracious child as she was, expressed her thanks for the kindness with which she had been treated. He replied

in very courteous terms; and, to the great astonishment of her father and myself, in Spanish, which he spoke fluently and well.

This was altogether so ridiculous, that I could not help laughing; and, when I recollected the many epithets Señor Joachim in his anger had bestowed upon him, I was amazed at the *sang-froid* with which he had listened to them.

"How, sir!" I exclaimed, "you speak Spanish! and yet you suffered me to——"

"Excuse me, Miss!" he said, "you called me your countryman, and spoke English to me. It was not for me to dictate to a lady what tongue she was to use. I said I was an Englander. I am; but not of the old country. I am one of the improved breed of Britishers; a New Englander, with not quite so much soft stuff about me as the bees in the ancient hive. *We* are hard as brass! The more you

rub us the more we shine." And then coolly turning to the Major, he said in Spanish, "Now, Señor, shall we finish our bargain?" What could be done with a man like this? Nothing, but to accede to any terms he might think fit to impose. The business was soon brought to a close, as far as it could be concluded; but there yet remained a difficulty, for Major Joachim de —— was a stranger in the town, and could not at once find means to procure the money.

Hoping to meet with some one to whom he might be known among the military of the garrison, he proposed to come back in the afternoon. I would willingly have remained with Inez, to wait his return; but he would not consent to this. As we were about to quit the room, Mr. Smithson bowed and opened the door for us with the greatest courtesy, saying, as he did so, while one of his own peculiar grins lighted

up his face with an expression of mockery and fun, "The lady will find her lacqueys in the antechamber! and the gentleman, the troops with which he proposed to storm my castle and seize my person. As a Spaniard he should know better the actual state of affairs in Spain." This speech was sufficiently explained on looking into the antechamber, where, round a glowing brazier, sat the two men who had followed us, sharing its comforts (for the day was cold) and apparently on the most cordial terms with three others, belonging to the household of this eccentric American, who was indeed, as he said, "hard as brass."

"He is right enough!" said Major de ——, as we passed into the streets, attended as before by my "lacqueys." "I ought to have known that fraud and violence are sure to triumph in this miserable country, where the people are degraded and brutalised by ages of bad government. I should leave

it for ever, I think, with little regret, unless I could see a gleam of hope that the bright visions of peace and freedom, which are now little more than the dreams of a few enthusiastic and brave spirits, might ultimately be realised. Unhappy Spain! with its vast variety of soil and climate — its inexhaustible resources — all, all rendered useless by the imbecility and wickedness of its rulers. How low, how mean is the position to which they have reduced this once great and powerful country!"

He paused, and we walked on in silence. He then added, "I am glad, however, that strange wretch is not your countryman, for I have a strong leaning towards the English. I have known some of them intimately. I have fought side by side with them in many a sharp contest, and I have always found them more or less eccentric, with too often an inordinate self-esteem, and haughty contempt for the natives of other nations; but

always honourable and faithful to their engagements, scrupulously performing all they promise."

On arriving at Madame Pereira's, he left me; and I found the poor lady in the same uncomfortable temper. In truth, it was not without reason that she was discontented. She had not only been deprived of the society of her good-looking husband, but her establishment had been quite deranged by the arrest of the workwoman and the servant. The place of the latter was, however, so ably filled by my countrywoman, that she had little to complain of on that head. I found her in the kitchen, with the dinner she had assisted in preparing quite ready to serve; and, as she had forgotten to add the usual ample allowance of garlic to one of the dishes, we made an excellent meal. Towards evening, Major de —— came again, and we returned to the house of Mr. Smithson.

On our way he said, "It is not without cause that I am partial to your countrymen. To many kindnesses I already owed them I have now to add another. I believe I should have been obliged to submit to a long delay before I could have finished this affair, but for the liberal spirit of a Colonel Forsyth of the ——, who lent me the sum, with no other guarantee for the safety of the money he risked, than the assurance of a Spaniard whom he knew, that I was a Castilian gentleman of good family, and a man of honour."

"Well," I said, pleased with this trait of noble confidence, "this is another proof of the eccentricity of which you accuse them."

"Yes," he replied, "this is truly an English action. As a people you are great and good, but indulge too freely a spirit of haughty intolerance for every thing that is not English. It gives to your manners that cold repulsion which chills the warmer

feelings of all foreigners with whom you associate; and, instead of exciting the gratitude and admiration which is so often due to you, you inspire nothing but a feeling of dislike. In fact, the favourite character of the Englishman abroad is, that of the *Bourru Bienfaisant.* You go about doing kind and generous acts with an air of scorn and contempt, which deprives them of all value."

Then I was too young, and had seen too little of the world, to appreciate the justice of these observations; but since I have been in France, Germany, Belgium, Holland, every where have I noticed with regret the sort of bull-dog surliness which so often characterises the natives of England.

Once again we were announced at the habitation of Mr. Smithson. He was not at home, but soon returned. The business was now quickly brought to a termination,

and we were at liberty to depart with the young hostage we had so unwillingly left before.

As we were about to do so, he said, with the same cool *nonchalance* he had exhibited throughout, "I congratulate you, sir, on the happy accident that placed your daughter under my care. The bungling fools who put her into my hands ought to have known it was wholly out of my way to separate from her friends a young lady like that. *My* business lies among the black faces. Any number of *them* I am willing to take charge of. I get them where I can, and carry them wherever they are wanted. There is a good deal of prejudice against this trade; and certainly we are forced to resort to very rough treatment with them sometimes, when the humanity-mongers and the "right-of-search" people come athwart us. Yes, they do get shamefully squeezed, that's the truth: but it pays well. If *I* did not carry

it on, others would. I have made a handsome sum by it. I shall only make one more voyage, and then retire to my native country, and live like a gentleman. I mean to join the Abolitionists, and fight for the niggers. I have got my money by them; they shall have the benefit of it. Yes, I shall go the whole hog for the black faces."

This extraordinary speech was answered by the Major, with a low and ceremonious bow, while his curling lip, and dilating nostrils, sufficiently indicated the sentiments he entertained for the *gentleman* who made it. For my own part, I was too much astonished and puzzled by this (to me very novel and incomprehensible specimen of mankind) to utter a word. In imitation of the Major, I made a low curtsey, and so we departed.

I had noticed that Inez wore a new and handsome dress; I afterwards found she

had also been supplied with several other articles, all of the best fashion and materials, at the expense of this man.

Heaven knows, poor child, she had need enough of them; and, as I considered they had been amply paid for, the expense making a very small set-off against the thousand dollars, I was quite convinced she ought to keep them. But no sooner did the fact become known to her father, than the pride of the Castilian gentleman took fire, and we were compelled to strip her instantly, and return them to the donor.

As no other place had been engaged, she returned with me to the house of Madame Pereira, who was now charged with the task of supplying a fresh wardrobe for her. This commission she at first refused; but on the assurance that Major —— had abandoned the prosecution, and that her husband would be immediately released, she condescended to accept it. In the

course of a few days my little friend was arrayed as became her station once more. The handsome sum that was presented as payment for this and other services, produced a somewhat softening effect on our surly hostess. Nevertheless she declared, under existing circumstances, she would rather not have her as an inmate of her dwelling. I thought on this point she was right. It could not be agreeable to any party. For although the Major, satisfied with the restoration of his child, had given up all ideas of revenging the sufferings they had inflicted on him, he could not but feel contempt and dislike to the wretched agents of the more infamous principal, whose treachery and avarice had caused them. Diego had confessed that he was largely paid for his services; and though he refused to name his employer, that employer was sufficiently well known to have been the mistress he served, a near relation of her victim's.

Commodious and well-furnished rooms having been found a few doors higher up in the same street, the Major, who had yet some weeks of his leave unexpired, with his daughter took up their abode in them, and became our neighbours; to the great delight of Inez, who could thus see me every day, and in good truth sometimes two and three times in one day.

But now I had nothing more to detain me in Spain; and once again my thoughts turned to England — to my home — my family. I longed to see them. I thought of them often; and yet when the idea of quitting Inez, perhaps for ever, presented itself, I felt a pain at my heart, a reluctance to set about preparing for the voyage, that I could myself scarcely understand. That three females, circumstanced as we had been on that desolate island, should cling to each other with friendship and affection was natural; but now we were restored to

all the comforts of the civilised world, and still the feelings which bound me to *her* seemed to strengthen.

I felt that I would willingly have waited for the return of spring, since the year was so far advanced; but an English vessel was expected to touch at this port. I was informed a Spanish lady intended to go to England in her, and would gladly defray my expenses in the capacity of a companion and interpreter, as she spoke no English. This would do away with the only remaining objection: my father's money would be spared. Mrs. Muggins was getting ready in hopes of securing a passage in her, and I must not be left behind.

"Strange perversity of the human heart!" I said to myself, as I sat down moping and melancholy. "How did I long for the period which was to re-unite me to my family, restore me to my native land, and all its early associations! and now that the means are

found, all difficulties obviated, how do I hail the event? with a burst of bitter tears."

So is it often in life: what we look forward to with ardent wishes, with the longing of expecting hope, sometimes through lingering years, turns out, when obtained, a curse; while what we have dreaded, shunned and fought against, has proved a blessing. I had hitherto said nothing on the subject of my departure to Inez; but now I had made up my mind, and I mentioned it. The poor little girl turned pale, and trembled. She was warmly attached to me, and she had not anticipated a separation: she was happy in the present time, and had not thought on the future.

The announcement was painful to me; I was glad it was over. I felt somewhat calmer, and set about my preparations with more courage. It was necessary for me to see the lady I was to accompany, in order to make some final arrangements. I went

to her. On my return I found Inez and her father waiting for me.

"What news is this, my dear Miss Mitford, my daughter has brought me? that you are about to return to your country, to abandon my poor Inez, who owes you such deep obligation, and who loves you so dearly. Is it indeed so?"

I uttered only a faint "yes," for I felt such a choking in my throat, that I was afraid to trust my voice, lest I should burst into tears, against which I struggled manfully.

After a short silence he said, "Suffer me to make you a proposition. You have known my daughter, comparatively speaking, but a short time, myself for a time still shorter; yet passed together under such circumstances as have attended our intercourse, days might well pass for months, if not for years. You are of a character candid and open. You have spoken of your family,

and their situation without disguise. You have said your father, being far from affluent, you were unwilling to throw on him any additional burden. Allow me to ask you why you should do so? In your own country you will probably think it necessary to employ your talents in forming the education of some young lady. Since you have declared you will not again undertake a voyage to India, I should most exceedingly rejoice if you would take Inez for a pupil. Her fortune will be considerable: she can well afford a liberal salary; and to secure you as a companion and friend for her, would add much, very much to the happiness of both of us. You will of course do nothing without the knowledge and consent of your father: write to him then.

"Tell him I propose to establish my daughter in some place where she will be under my immediate protection; and as she and the lady we would fain engage to

educate her are both very young, I would place in the house with them a respectable female, somewhat older. It is my intention to quit the army. I have suffered a good deal in the service. My health has been greatly shaken. I feel at this moment very sensibly the effects of the toil and hardships of a soldier's life. As soon as I can resign my commission honourably, I will conduct you to your native country. I have long wished to make a visit to that far-famed England, of which I have heard so much. Inez would make a faster progress in her English, and you would return to your friends under a safe escort.

"Tell me then, my dear Miss Mitford, will you consent to this? Will you write to your father, and let him decide for you?"

Did I refuse this proposal? No; my heart bounded with joy. I felt like a reprieved criminal at this postponing of a separation I dreaded. I promised to write

and ask permission to accept it; rejoicing in my secret heart that, even should he refuse to accede to it, some time must still elapse before a letter could arrive. In those distant days steamers had not learned to puff themselves across wide seas in a few short hours; no iron roads aided the celerity with which letters are now conveyed from one extremity of the earth to another; the world was still shuffling about in slippers. It had not then put on the seven-league boots with which it now strides from land to land.

I wrote; my epistle was despatched; my next occupation was to inform the lady I was to have accompanied of this change of plan. This was a mere piece of ceremony. A few conventional phrases of civility, and an expression of regret I did not feel, settled that; but when I made the same communication to Mrs. Muggins, it was a different affair. I could not without pain

announce to *her* that, on the arrival of this vessel, which was daily expected, we were to separate, probably for ever.

"So," she said, "you are going to stay here, are you? Well, it don't much matter, for we should have parted when we got to London; for I must go to Calcutta as soon as I can get another outfit. And yet I'm sorry too; for, after all, perhaps you would be safer with your own friends in England than these new ones here."

She looked earnestly at me as she said this, and then added, "But, upon my life, I believe *you* are glad you are not going home. You turn away your face; you don't like to be looked at: 'tis a bad sign! Heaven help you! I wish I wasn't forced to leave you, you are so young, and don't know that the best men have but little conscience where women are concerned."

She shook her head as she finished this speech, and remained more silent than

usual during the rest of the day, — a most certain indication that the subject which occupied her thoughts was deeply interesting.

The next day Inez came with a troubled face to tell us her father was ill.

"Poor Papa," she said, "he is not well enough to get up. He has a wound on his arm, which was only half healed, and now it has opened again."

She stopped to wipe her eyes which were full of tears, and then went on, "Papa has had so much worry and fatigue on my account, I am afraid he is going to be very ill. His arm is painful. I don't know how to dress it. Moreno, his man, is so clumsy and stupid! and he will not let us send for a doctor. Do come and see him, and try to prevail on him to have some medical advice. He says he has no confidence in any body but his own doctor, and he is far, far from here."

I explained to Mrs. Muggins the state of the case, and we went together to visit the sick gentleman. We found him flushed and feverish, with parched lips and a burning hand. I tried to persuade him to send for a medical man; but he said, "No, they will only torture me as they have often done before. I have no faith in them; nine-tenths of them are ignorant quacks."

"It may be so," I observed; "yet, surely, in a place large as this, there are men of eminence and reputation to be found."

But he would not consent to send for any body. This was a part of his character. He had made up his mind, and entreaties to alter his determination only irritated him. Finding this, I said, "You are in pain, and will not have help. Will you let *me* look at the wound in your arm? To this he assented. We undid the ban-

dage. It was inflamed and swollen, and must have caused him much suffering. I had great faith in my own skill from the large practice I had had among the poorest class of my father's flock, and set to work confidently. With some difficulty I obtained what I required; but I did obtain it, and, steeping some linen in a cooling lotion, I bound it up again. In a short time I had the satisfaction to find the pain subside, and my patient fell asleep. Giving instructions to Inez how to go on in my absence, I returned home. The next day she came to say Papa was better; but he would not suffer any one to remove the bandages I had applied, but myself; so I was obliged to go again. In a few days the pain and inflammation were quite gone; the wound was healing fast. There was no longer any necessity for my visits, and I ceased to make them: but the accounts Inez brought were not satisfactory. The invalid was

weak and irritable. "Papa is so cross and impatient," she said, "that I and Moreno can do nothing right."

And thus things went on some time. The expected ship did not arrive: the expected letter did. When it was put into my hands, and I recognised my father's handwriting, I was seized with such a fit of trembling, that I could hardly open it; and when I did, it was some time before I was calm enough to read it. It was a kind, an affectionate, a long letter. After giving me a detailed account of the state of the family and affairs, and many little incidents deeply interesting to me, because relating to those who were dear to me, he said, "You ask for my directions, my commands, with respect to your acceptance of the proposal made to you to remain in Spain. I have no commands to issue, no directions to give; but if my wishes have any weight with you, you will at once return to your native

country — to your father, and your sisters, who so anxiously long to see you."

What were the feelings excited in my wayward heart by this recal to my native home—grief, regret, and disappointment. I sat and wept over the letter, but with no idea of disregarding the course of conduct it marked out. No; it was because I bent implicitly to the will of my father therein expressed that I wept so bitterly.

"He sends me no commands," I said to myself, half angry, "as if he did not know that his wishes are commands." Then my anger turned on myself, and those who excited feelings so new, so strange, so unnatural. Alas! I could no longer cheat myself with the idea that it was a separation from Inez alone I so dreaded. I now knew too well the state of my heart. I had given it, and all its strong affection, unsolicited, unsought, to a haughty gentleman, whose utmost friendship for me went no

farther than a wish to make me the governess of his daughter. I was ashamed of myself. Where was my self-respect? the maidenly pride which distinguished my countrywomen? The only consolation that remained to me was, that my weakness was unknown: I had not betrayed myself.

I ceased to weep, but sat cold, silent, and dissatisfied with myself, and every body else, still holding the letter in my hand, when Inez came in. On seeing the letter she exclaimed, "Ah, it is come. It is from England—from your father!"

I said yes, but added nothing more. She looked earnestly in my face, but asked no questions, and instantly left me. In about half-an-hour she came again, and said, "Papa begs you will be so good as to come and speak to him; he has been trying to get up, that he might come to you, but he is so weak that he could not come."

I returned with her. On seeing me, he said, "Inez tells me you have received a letter from your father, and that you have been weeping over it."

He said no more, but fixed his eyes on me, apparently expecting I should speak; but I was still in a half sorrowful, half sullen mood, and would not.

He began again: "You have been weeping because you have permission to remain with us, and will not yet return to your family?"

"No; I have not permission to remain here; I am ordered home."

"Then you wept because you were about to leave us?"

I was half angry to be thus interrogated, and replied, "Tears do not always flow from grief. There are tears of joy."

"And do you mean to say," he inquired in a low voice, apparently shocked, "that you have shed tears of joy at leaving us,—

even though it be to return to your native country, and your natural friends? Leaving us for ever!"

"No," I replied, struggling to restrain the tears which threatened to flow afresh, and resolutely suppressing any indication of the emotion which was almost choking me. "No, I do not rejoice that I am going to leave you; I shall grieve sincerely at quitting Inez."

"You will regret the loss of Inez—and only Inez?"

This sort of cross-examination, fortunately for me, roused something like a feeling of indignation, which was of great service to me; and I said, with the coldest civility, "I must always remember with gratitude the kindness and courtesy I have received from you, sir, during the short time I have had the honour of being known to you. I fancied there was an expression of vexation and disappointment on his face, as he

turned it away from me, and sank back on the pillow from which he had half raised himself at my entrance into the room. As I left the chamber with my countrywoman, Inez followed me, sad and sorrowful. She said nothing, but the tears were silently trickling down her face. I hardly dared to look at her, lest my own courage should give way, and I should join her in a weeping duet.

Every leisure moment of the next day I devoted to arranging the small wardrobe I possessed, in such a manner as to have it ready when the expected vessel should arrive.

I saw nothing of Inez till the morning after, when she came in with a pale face and swollen eyes, looking very unhappy. "Papa is very ill," she said; "he has had no sleep. Moreno says he has heard him, for two nights past, restless and moaning the whole night long. He has a pain in his

side, where he was hurt at the time he got the wound in his arm. He is going to get up; and Moreno says he ought not to do so. This is the reason I came to you now, in hopes that, on hearing how ill he is, you will go to him. He said just now that he must see you again to-day. He has something to say to you, I think about my going to England with you. I am not sure, but I think so."

This communication changed the face of affairs entirely. I had been trying to harden my heart into a refusal, but this new idea changed at once my resolution. To intrust his daughter to my care in a foreign land, would be a proof of esteem and confidence the most flattering. I started up delighted, exclaiming, "Surely I will go to him. Come, dear, let us go directly." If I might take Inez with me, the ties which bound my heart to Spain would be but half broken.

She saw how pleased I was; but she was still sad, observing, as we crossed the street, "We shall be forced to leave Papa, and he will have nobody but Moreno to take care of him."

He looked more pale and ill than I had ever seen him, but seemed pleased with my visit, and said, "It is kind of you to come, for I wanted to see you. I have another proposal to make to you, on your acceptance of which my future comfort, and, I believe, my health depends. This irresolution and suspense will kill me. You must therefore decide at once yourself, without reference to your father. I cannot consent to wait till you can receive an answer to another letter. Will you promise me to decide for yourself?"

"I will, I do promise!" I replied promptly, for I saw he was much agitated. "I know what you would propose, and I am sure I shall accept it."

"How," he said, looking earnestly at me. "You know what I would say to you? No! you are not aware of the subject on which I wish to speak."

"Well, well," I said, "never mind; tell me yourself; but Inez has already told me."

"Inez has told you!" he repeated; "Inez has not the remotest idea of my purpose. But you are sure you will consent to my scheme?"

"Yes."

"Well, then, sit down and I will tell you." A faint smile stole over his face, as if he was amused, as he said this, which puzzled me.

Inez left the room, to prepare something for him, and he then began to speak again, with a very grave face.

"I have known you, Miss Mitford, but a short time, and I wished much to have been allowed a little more, before I took the decided step I am about to do; but the cir-

cumstances in which I find myself, leave me no choice. I must speak now or never. Fortunately your character is so open and candid, that, notwithstanding our short acquaintance, I believe I know it pretty well; and am thereby somewhat justified in doing what would otherwise be justly considered as precipitate and rash."

He paused for an instant, and then continued: "I am nearly fifteen years older than you, with a broken constitution, and yet I wish to prevail on you not to leave us—to remain with us as one of the family—to become the mother of Inez, and my wife. I must have an answer. If you wish for time to reflect, take it, but not long. I cannot live under the torture of suspense and uncertainty. Go, if you will, and think on what I have said, but come back quickly. That I have a true and sincere affection for you is certain. If you have love enough for me, to take me as

I am, I shall be a happy man. If not — If you do not — cannot ——"

The faint flush which for a moment coloured his face, died away, leaving it as pale as death. He sank back on the pillow, with the phrase unfinished.

What answer did I make to words that created so much astonishment in my mind, so much joy in my heart? None. That happy heart was too full to admit of speech. But I started up, bent over that poor pale face, and —— what I did next, I will not tell.

Inez, who had been absent a long time, re-entered the room. She was too intelligent not to perceive something extraordinary had taken place. She looked at her father, then at me. He did not leave the mystery long unexplained. "Come and thank Isabel," he said to her, "for having consented to take you for a daughter. She is to be your mother!"

They both called me Isabel, the Spanish of my English name Elizabeth. The dear child! how astonished, how delighted she was. She danced about the room like a mad thing, exclaiming in English, "Papa, mamma! Spanish papa, English mamma! I'm glad, I'm glad!" then flung herself on the floor at my feet, and buried her face in my lap. Three happier persons than our little group were not to be found in Spain.

When I met Mrs. Muggins, after this long and agitating visit to my Spanish friends, "Ah, well," she exclaimed, "you are come back at last. Upon my conscience you seem to have got comfortably over your squeamishness. You could not wait ten minutes that I might have gone with you. Poor young moth, flying round the candle! You ——. But what's come to you now? Your eyes are red, as if you had been crying, and yet you look as if you could get

up and dance. What's the meaning of all this?"

"Listen to me, my dear friend," I said, "and I will tell you."

I then related to her the whole history of the events which, during the last few hours, had effected the happy change in my fate. When I had finished, she said, laughing heartily, "So the Spanish Don, as your father would not let him have you for a governess — he was right there—has asked you to be his wife? Ah, you did not make him ask twice. Well, I'm heartily glad, and that's the truth: my mind misgave me sadly about you; for though I could not understand what he said, I saw well enough how fond he was of you. And you, poor thing——Well, well, I'm heartily glad. When is the wedding to be?"

"I don't know," I replied. "Nothing has been said upon the subject; but I suppose

not till we go to England, for my father cannot come here."

"Your father! Your father is not the only person who can perform the marriage ceremony."

"There may be other persons who *can* unite me to my husband; but it is my father, and no other, who *will* do so," I said, very decidedly.

"We shall see," she replied, with another laugh. "Your Don has been used to have his own way pretty much, I guess, and so he will now, or I'm greatly mistaken. I don't believe he will consent to put it off so long; and I recommend you, my dear, if he proposes to marry you at once, not to stand out about trifles."

"Trifles!" I repeated. "Is it a trifle that——" I was about to make a very energetic speech on the subject; but recollecting that my countrywoman could not well understand the feelings by which I was

influenced, I contented myself with a silent but very decided resolution, to insist on having my own way on this point.

The next day Inez came, no longer with the sad and dejected air she had worn the day before, but dancing in, with a cheerful face, light as a bird, saying, as she entered, "Oh, Papa is so much better. Moreno says he slept quietly all night. He begs you will be so good as to come to him; he wants to speak to you. Colonel Forsyth has just left him. Papa sent for him. Papa would be glad to see you too, if you please, Madam Lolo," she said, skipping across the room to Mrs. Muggins, and kissing her hand in her own graceful style. We both returned with her.

My affianced husband was sitting up in his bed, still pale and weak, but with a cheerful face, and so evidently better, that my heart bounded with joy. After a civil

greeting to my friend, he said to me, "My dear Isabel, I have just seen Colonel Forsyth. He says there is an Englishman here, who is a minister of the Protestant church. As you are a Protestant, and I a Catholic, it will be necessary to have the marriage ceremony performed twice. I wish to ask you, then, when I shall engage the services of this gentleman, your countryman, to ——"

"Never, sir! not at all," I replied hastily. "It is my own father who must officiate in the sacred ceremony which is to bind me to you for life. I cannot consent to any other arrangement. I have written to him to tell him so."

"You have written — you have already written to this effect?" he said, with a vexed and agitated face. "You have not sent the letter?"

"No, I have not, but I propose to do so."

"Listen to me, Isabel. You know how I am situated; my leave of absence is nearly expired; I must soon rejoin my regiment; I shall take my daughter with me. You will not, I know, in defiance to the will of your father, accompany us in the character of friend and companion, or governess to Inez. We must then be separated, perhaps for years. You will be my affianced wife, but in a distant land; for you must either return at once to your father, or go with me. On this I shall insist. I will not consent to your remaining any longer with these miserable Pereiras."

"I do not wish, I do not intend to remain with them," I exclaimed. "I will go to my father and wait till ——"

"Till I come to claim you. That time may never arrive," he said gravely. "I will not deceive you, Isabel: I am better, much better to-day than I have been for some time past; but I am not well. I am still

feeble in body,—in mind too, perhaps,—for I feel if I am again condemned to the anxiety I have lately undergone, I shall again sink.

"You must forgive me if I tell you that it appears to me your ideas of the duty you owe your father are somewhat extravagant. You have solemnly pledged yourself to become my wife. I consider myself your husband, bound to cherish and protect you. You owe to me the care and kindness my weak health renders so necessary; yet how can these mutual duties be performed if seas are to divide us, and we live as strangers, each in their native land? As a single woman, doubtless your first duty was to obey your father; but as a married one—for the legal ceremony which has yet to be gone through between us, cannot bind us more than we are already bound; it is but the public annunciation of ties already

formed, required by the community for the benefit of all — your first duty is now due to your husband.

"Were there any reasonable objection to what I propose, I would not urge a compliance with my wishes; but to give way to what appears to me as little better than caprice, or at least a mistaken sense of duty, I cannot consent."

"Caprice!" I exclaimed again, half angry at this marital harangue. "Do you call it caprice, that I wish to show my gratitude and respect to a father, the kindest and best that ever woman had? Shall I repay the sacrifices he made to procure me the means of education—the untiring care and affection with which he watched over me during years of anxious solicitude? My only parent! shall I repay him all I owe, by giving myself away without even the civility of telling my purpose? I will only ask for time to write to him, and to

receive his answer. You can apply for an extension of your leave of absence: you must have done so had your health not mended. You are not well enough for such a journey. As soon as my father's consent is obtained, I will not ask for another day's delay: you shall yourself fix the time for our marriage."

"And should your father refuse his consent," he said, while a dark shade crossed his face and he threw himself back on the pillow, "what will you then do?"

I hesitated. I had not thought of this. At length I said, "He will *not* refuse, when I tell him my happiness depends on his consent."

He replied gravely, "Your father is a priest of what *you* call the Reformed Religion. He will probably think it his duty to prevent your marriage with a Catholic. You must then act in defiance to his known and declared will, or break

your solemn pledge to me. I cannot consent to wait for such a contingency."

The spirit of opposition possessed me, I believe, for I could not deny that he had put the question in its true light; and yet I determined to have my own way. I certainly did not believe my father's consent would be refused; for, though a pious Protestant, he was too enlightened and liberal in mind to be a bigot. I saw no danger in persisting, and I said, "I cannot be legally married without his consent: I am not of age!"

I blushed with something like a feeling of shame as I uttered this equivocation, for in five days I should complete my one-and-twentieth year. He made no reply; but Mrs. Muggins, who had hitherto sat silent, alternately looking at one and then the other, and trying to comprehend what was going on, now raised her voice against me.

"I can't understand what you say," she said, "but I am certain *he* is right and *you* are wrong. I'm afraid, my dear, you are playing the fool."

I explained to her what I proposed, and he refused to accede to.

"Ah!" she observed, "it is just as I thought. He is quite right. Who knows what may happen? You are foolish to run the risk you do. You are like the cat when she gets a mouse, you will play with it till you lose it."

My betrothed made no farther attempt to change my resolve, but lay grave and silent on his pillow; and so we left him. Inez followed us, and had a short conversation with my countrywoman, which I did not hear, but I afterwards learned was relative to my age, which she well knew.

The next morning Major —— was well enough to get up, and came to make me a

visit; his face was awfully grave and stern, but I was greatly rejoiced to see him so much better. He entered the room with a ceremonious bow, and, accosting me with cold civility, said, "Will you have the goodness to tell me your age precisely? I am unwilling to believe you have descended to subterfuge for the purpose of postponing our union!"

I had descended to a subterfuge, and now I was heartily ashamed of it, and would have gladly recalled it; but I would not tell a falsehood. I confessed the fact. His pale face flushed to a crimson hue, which, however, soon died away; and he said, with a calm, cold air, "I perceive you hold very lightly the ties which unite us. You will not be sorry to be released from them. I come to restore your liberty. We will forget we ever thought of a union, which would have produced unhappiness to both. I confess it never had the sanction of my judgment, which was wholly subju-

gated by the warm affection I felt for you. On my own account I regret I ever knew you; but my daughter owes you a debt of gratitude, of which I trust you will not refuse to accept some proof. We shall quit this place almost directly. With your permission, we will come and take leave of you before we depart." With another low bow he left the room. I stood still, cold, stupified. I could scarcely understand the terrible revolution my fate had again undergone.

Was it indeed true, and not a hideous dream, that he whom I so fondly loved, whom I regarded as my husband, had decidedly and unequivocally renounced me? broken voluntarily, and for ever, the bonds which existed between us, and left me, without allowing me to utter a word in my own defence?

My heart swelled as if it would burst, but I could not weep. So suddenly this

misery had fallen on me, that it seemed to have half paralyzed me. Only one hour before I had been happy as the happiest creature in the world, rejoicing in the power I believed I held over his affection,—and now, I was an outcast! a wretched rejected woman! left to pine for the rest of my days, young as I was, for the happiness I had so wantonly sported with. For now, with bitter repentance, I confessed to myself that he had only urged what was reasonable, and that my duty was to have obeyed. I had no hope of shaking his purpose. His daughter always spoke of him as kind, gentle, generous, but sternly determined, whenever he had decided on a point. It was yet early, but I said I was ill, and went to bed that I might avoid the further humiliation of allowing any one to see how very miserable I was.

What a night I passed! Not once did I close my eyes, although I pretended to

sleep, that I might not be questioned. But Mrs. Muggins could not be wholly blinded to the fact that some great misfortune had befallen me, and there was but one source from whence it could come. She soon found out I had indeed been "playing the fool." In the morning, as soon as she saw my face, she exclaimed, "Good Lord, child! you look like a ghost! Why, what on earth have you been doing to yourself?"

I made no answer, but I heard her mutter something about "lost the mouse." She asked me no more questions, but soon after breakfast she put on her bonnet and went out. When she came back she said, "Don't you want to know where I have been?"

"I can guess," I replied; "and I should like to know who you saw," for my grief had subdued my pride; and I was grateful to her for the friendly interest she took in my fate.

"I saw Inez only. She said her father

was improving in health; that he was gone out to look for a carriage for their journey, and she and Moreno had orders to get ready. But the poor little thing, instead of packing up, sat crying, fit to break her heart, because —because——"

She stopped, and then added, "You know what made her cry, so I need not say any more about it."

I did know, alas! only too well. So passed that long, restless, miserable, melancholy day, and another sleepless night. I at once longed for and dreaded the coming day; for I believed it would bring me the leave-taking visit, the very thought of which agitated me terribly. At every little noise during the morning my heart bounded and throbbed, till it almost took away my breath. But it was not till the afternoon that they came, and my sensibility was nearly exhausted by long continued emotion. My frame weakened by want of

sleep, I was comparatively calm and quiet. They entered the room grave and silent, both of them; but I saw Inez was struggling to restrain her tears. I offered them seats, saying to myself, "I have but to bear up steadily a little while: it will soon be over. I shall at least have peace. I will not let this proud man, who so lightly shook me off, see how much I suffer at the separation he has so haughtily decreed. I will, at least, support the dignity of my sex; he shall have no farther triumph."

They sat down. "We will not detain you long, madam," he said. "We come but to inquire after your health, to thank you for your kindness to us, and to request you to write to Inez as soon as you arrive in England, that we may have the satisfaction of knowing you reached your native land safe and well. We must always feel deeply interested in your welfare. Inez has brought you a little keepsake, as a

memento of her friendship for you, of her love and gratitude. I have also to request you will be good enough to give me your father's address."

The sound of his voice, the kind and gentle tone in which he spoke, the interest he still took in my fate, banished in a moment the apathy of exhaustion I mistook for courage.

An indescribable tumult again arose in my heart, and shook my frame. I started up, and went to a table at the other side of the room, on which were writing materials, glad of the occasion it gave me to turn my face from him. But when I would have written the address, I could not fashion a letter; the pen seemed to leap from the paper. If my life had depended on it I could not, at that moment, have written a word legibly.

He saw the useless attempt I made, rose

from his seat, and said, "We will not trouble you to do it now; you will perhaps have the goodness to send it to me. Inez, take leave of Miss Mitford."

The poor child threw her arms round my neck, weeping and sobbing convulsively. I had no tears to shed. I trembled violently, but held her with all the little strength I had.

My eyes were, however, fixed on *him*. I saw he was terribly agitated. There was an expression of suffering on his face; but he sat down, and covered it with his hand.

A ray of hope broke through the darkness of my despair; I left Inez, and, springing forward, I sank (partly from weakness) at his feet, exclaiming, "Forgive me! oh forgive me! and do not leave me! I grieve that I offended you; take me with you! I will be true and faithful to you, nurse and comfort you. I will be to Inez a kind mother."

In this humiliating position I remained I know not how long. His face was still covered with his hand, but a stifled groan burst from him. He raised me, kissed my hand, and murmured, "You are very good, very kind; but—it cannot be—no, it cannot be."

What had now become of the dignity of my sex? the maidenly reserve I was to have supported? I had submitted to sue, humbly to plead for favour and acceptance, and had been again rejected. I had no longer any hope. A cold torpor crept over my limbs; I reeled, and should have fallen, had he not caught me, and placed me in a seat. I did not faint, nor lose my senses, for I knew that he and Inez each held one of my hands; but I had no power to speak or move. I was cold and inanimate as a corpse. After a time I revived, and became impatient to get away. To put an end to

this painful meeting I half raised myself, and said, "Now leave me. I cannot bear —I will not have any more of this! May Heaven bless you both, but go away at once!"

"Not yet," said Inez, again weeping; "oh not yet, while you are so ill!"

"No, not yet," repeated her father, kissing the hand he held; "not till you are better, Isabel — my wife!"

I looked in his face; it wore a troubled expression. It was grave, sad even, but there was nothing like mockery in it. He had again decided, and against his judgment, to commit his honour and his happiness to my keeping.

What next befell me I cannot exactly tell: but I found myself lying undressed on the bed where I slept, Inez and Mrs. Muggins standing by it. I felt very weak, and somewhat bewildered. The words, "It cannot be," and "Isabel, my wife,"

seemed eternally chasing each other through my troubled brain. I had only an indistinct recollection of what passed at this harassing interview. I now looked at my two friends alternately, hoping they would explain it; but Inez instantly ran off, exclaiming, "She is better! she is better! I will run and tell Papa."

"I must see him too," I said. "I must know — I will get up and go to him."

"Indeed you'll do no such thing," said Mrs. Muggins; "we have had trouble enough with you already; we were forced to send for a doctor. And now, my dear, as you are better, and have got your senses again, I shall tell you a bit of my mind. Here's a gentleman of good station and fortune takes a fancy to you, (nobody knows why, except it be that you are rather good looking, and a taking sort of a

person,) and offers to marry you; and before he has well settled his mind about it, you play him such pranks that he gets sick of the business, and will have no more to do with you. Now, I must tell you——"

"Then he did not say 'Isabel, my wife?'" I inquired with a sinking heart, breaking in on her harangue. "He did not say, 'We will *not* leave you?'"

"Well, well," she replied laughing, "perhaps he did. In truth he has made up his mind to take you. But look now, for this is what I wanted to say to you, if ever you get into these tantrums again, and play him such another trick, you may whistle for your Don. You'll never get him back again."

I made no reply, but sank back from my half-raised position, my pride somewhat humbled, but tranquil and happy.

Seven days afterwards I was married in the drawing-room of the British Consul, who

gave me to my husband, in the presence of Mrs. Muggins, Inez, and Colonel Forsyth; afterwards by a priest, according to the rites of the Catholic religion, in the Cathedral Church of San Jeronimo, in the Plaza Mayor.

I accompanied my husband to Arragon, where we remained little more than six months; when, having made such an arrangement of his affairs as enabled him to quit a country whose political state mortified and disgusted him, we came to England; and I had the happiness of seeing united round me all I best loved on earth. Mrs. Muggins joined her husband at Calcutta, where she still remains. Of Captain Muron, or of Jacques Bontemps, I have never heard; nor of the French sailors. But the kind-hearted Dane, Captain Thorwaldson, (to whom I gave my father's address, as well as to Jacques and Le Martineau, in case they should come to England,) made us a

visit not long since; and met, as he well deserved, a most cordial reception.

And now, what have I more to tell, except that I have been many years a happy wife: that, by my care and affection, I have nursed my husband's shaken frame into sound health. The only fault I can accuse him of, is that he will not let me have my own way when he knows I am wrong. We are living in my own dear native land, beautiful, garden-like England, within two miles of —— Rectory, of which my father is now incumbent: that I am now able to play the part of "Lady Bountiful" to my heart's content, distributing food and physic, work, and the means of instruction, to all who need them; while my father and my husband, the Catholic and the Protestant, (neither of them converts to that narrow creed which would bound the favour of the Almighty to one

small fraction of the millions he has created,) go hand in hand, aiding and cheering their poorer neighbours, of all sects and denominations; not merely doling out to them a degrading charity, but furnishing employment, and striving to excite among them a self-supporting, self-relying spirit.

So successful have been their efforts, that already the Union-houses are half-emptied; and, as "feudal rights" and "breeches-pocket" legislation, which starved and brutalised them, are somewhat in abeyance, we do not despair of seeing

"A bold peasantry, their country's pride,"

resuscitated, and traversing, with a free foot, the beautiful green lanes and fertile fields of their native land. May Heaven give health and strength to those true patriots who have struggled and are still struggling in the noble cause! striving to set free

the serfs of England, and raise them once again to the dignity of *men !*

Thus I conclude this

"Strange eventful history."

Let those who will, cavil at the tale, and say it is not true. I aver it to be another combination of TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD.

THE END.

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A

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